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**MORE TRAMPS ABROAD**

**INDIA**

**MARK TWAIN**



**THE MODERN PUBLISHING CO.**



## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Mark Twain's "More Tramps Abroad" contains, among other narratives, an account of the author's travels in India which extends to nearly 185 pages. That account has been issued here in a separate volume for use in Indian Schools and Colleges. In the present form, the narrative is still in the words and style of the author himself. But the original has undergone considerable abridgement and some rearrangement of chapters, in the interests of continuity of narrative. A good deal of digression and a large number of "Asides" have been omitted, as also some expressions of views which seemed out of place in a book meant for young readers. With these alterations, it is hoped, the book becomes both interesting and instructive, and will be found to possess sufficient literary merit.

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## CHAPTER I.

*January 20.*—BOMBAY ! A bewitching place, a bewildering place, an enchanting place—the Arabian Nights come again ! It is a vast city ; contains about a million inhabitants. Indians they are, with a slight sprinkling of white people—not enough to have the slightest modifying effect upon the massed dark complexion of the public. It is winter here, yet the weather is the divine weather of June, and the foliage is the fresh and heavenly foliage of June. There is a rank of noble great shade-trees across the way from the hotel, and under them sit groups of picturesque Indians of both sexes ; and the juggler in his turban is there with his snakes and his magic ; and all day long the cabs and the multitudinous varieties of costume flock by. It does not seem as if one could ever get tired of watching this moving show, this shining and shifting spectacle. . . . In the great bazaar the pack and jam of persons were marvellous, the sea of rich-coloured turbans and draperies an inspiring sight, and the quaint and showy Indian architecture was just the right setting for it. Toward sunset another show ; this is the drive around the seashore to Malabar Point, where Lord Sandhurst, the Governor of the Bombay Presidency, lives. Parsee palaces all along the first part of the drive ; and past them all the world is driving ; the private carriages of wealthy Englishmen and Indians of rank are manned by a driver and three footmen in stunning Oriental liveries—two of these turbaned statues standing up behind, as fine as monuments. Sometimes even the public carriages have this superabundant crew, slightly modified—one to drive,

one to sit by and see it done, and one to stand up behind and yell—yell when there is anybody in the way, and for practice when there isn't. It all helps to keep up the liveliness and augment the general sense of swiftness and energy and confusion and pow-wow.

In the region of Scandal Point—felicitous name—where there are handy rocks to sit on and a noble view of the sea on the one hand, and on the other the passing and repassing whirl and tumult of gay carriages, are great groups of comfortably-off Parsee women—perfect flower-beds of brilliant colour, a fascinating spectacle. Tramp, tramp, tramping along the road, in singles, couples, groups and gangs, you have the working man and the working woman—but not clothed like ours. Usually the man is a nobly-built great athlete, with not a rag on but his loin-handkerchief; his colour a deep dark brown, his skin satin, his rounded muscles knobbing it as if it had eggs under it. Usually the woman is a slender and shapely creature, as erect as a lightning rod, and she has but one thing on—a bright-coloured piece of stuff which is wound about her head and her body down nearly half way to her knees, and which clings like her own skin. Her legs and feet are bare, and so are her arms, except for her fanciful bunches of loose silver rings on her ankles and on her arms. She has jewelery bunched in the side of her nose, also, and showy cluster-rings on her toes. When she undresses for bed, she takes off her jewelery, I suppose. If she took off anything more, she would catch cold. As a rule she has a large shiny brass water-jar of graceful shape on her head, and one of her naked arms curves up and the hand

holds it there. She is so straight, so erect, and she steps with such style, and such easy grace and dignity; and her curved arm and her brazen jar are such a help to the picture.

It is all colour, bewitching colour, enchanting colour—everywhere—all around—all the way around the curving great opaline bay clear to Government House, where the turbaned big *chuprassies* stand grouped in state at the door in their robes of fiery red, and do most properly and stunningly finish up the splendid show and make it theatrically complete. I wish I were a chuprassy.

This is indeed India ! The land of dreams and romance, of fabulous wealth and fabulous poverty, of splendour and rags, of palaces and hovels, of famine and pestilence, of genii and giants and Aladdin lamps, of tigers and elephants, the cobra and the Jungle, the country of a hundred nations and a thousand religions, cradle of the human race, birthplace of human speech, mother of history, grandmother of legend, great-grandmother of Tradition, whose yesterdays bear date with the mouldering antiquities of the rest of the nations—the one sole country under the sun that is endowed with an imperishable interest for alien prince and alien peasant, for lettered and ignorant, wise and fool, rich and poor, the one land that *all* men desire to see, and having seen once, by even a glimpse, would not give that glimpse for the shows of all the rest of the globe combined. Even now, after the lapse of a year, the delirium of those days in Bombay has not left me, and I hope never will. It was all new, no detail of it hackneyed.

And India did not wait for morning, it began at the hotel—straightway. The lobbies and halls were full of turbaned, and fez'd, and embroidered-cap'd and barefooted and cotton-clad dark men, some of them rushing about, others at rest, squatting, or sitting on the ground; some of them chattering with energy, others still and dreamy; in the dining-room every man's own private servant standing behind his chair, and dressed for a part in the Arabian Nights.

Our rooms were high up, on the front. A white man—he was a burly German—went up with us, and brought three servants along to see to arranging things. About fourteen others followed in procession with the hand-baggage; each carried an article—and only one; a bag, in some case, in other cases less. One strong *hamal* carried my overcoat, another a parasol, another a box of cigars, another a novel, and the last man in the procession had no load but a fan. It was all done with earnestness and sincerity, there was not a smile in the procession, from the head of it to the tail of it. Each man waited patiently, tranquilly, in no sort of hurry, till one of us found time to give him a copper, then he bent his head reverently, touched his forehead with his fingers, and went his way. They seemed a soft and gentle race, and there was something both winning and touching about their demeanour.

Some servants—I don't remember how many—went into my bedroom, now, and put things to rights, and arranged the mosquito bar, and I went to bed to nurse my cough. It was about nine in the evening.

What a state of things ! For three hours, the yelling and shouting of servants in the hall continued, along with the velvety patter of their swift bare feet—what a racket it was ! They were yelling orders and messages down three flights. Why, in the matter of noise it amounted to a riot, an insurrection, a revolution. And then there were other noises mixed up with these and at intervals tremendously accenting them—roofs falling in, I judged, windows smashing, persons being murdered, crows squawking and deriding and cursing, canaries screeching, monkeys jabbering, macaws blaspheming, and every now and then fiendish bursts of laughter and explosions of dynamite. By midnight I had suffered all the different kinds of shocks there are, and knew that I could never more be disturbed by them, either isolated or in combination. Then came peace—stillness deep and solemn—and lasted till five.

## CHAPTER II

In India your day may be said to begin with the bearer's knock on the bedroom door, accompanied by a formula of words—a formula which is intended to mean that the bath is ready. It doesn't really seem to mean anything at all. But that is because you are not used to 'bearer' English. You will presently understand.

Where he gets his English is his own secret. There is nothing like it elsewhere in the earth ; or even in paradise perhaps, but the other place is probably full of it. You hire him as soon as you touch Indian soil ; for no matter what your sex is, you cannot do without him. He is messenger, valet, cham-



bermaid, table-waiter, lady's maid, courier—he is every thing. He carries a coarse linen clothes-bag and a quilt ; he sleeps on the stone floor outside your chamber door, and gets his meals you do not know where nor when ; you only know that he is not fed on the premises, either when you are in an hotel or when you are a guest in a private house. We had three of him in two and a half months.

The first bearer that applied, waited below and sent up his recommendations. That was the first morning in Bombay. We read them over ; carefully, cautiously, thoughtfully. There was not a fault to find with them—except one: they were all from Americans. Is that a slur ? If it is, it is a deserved one. In my experience, an American's recommendation of a servant is not usually valuable. We are too good-natured a race ; we hate to say the unpleasant thing ; we shrink from speaking the unkind truth about a poor fellow whose bread depends upon our verdict ; so we speak of his good points only, thus not scrupling to tell a lie—a *silent* lie—for in not mentioning his bad ones we as good as say he hasn't any.

As I was saying, the bearer's recommendations were all from American tourists, and according to these recommendations, Manuel X— was supreme in all the arts connected with his complex trade ; and these manifold arts were mentioned—and praised—in detail. His English was spoken of in terms of warm admiration—admiration verging upon rapture. I took pleased note of that, and hoped that some of it might be true.

We had to have some one right away ; so the family went downstairs and took him a week on trial ; then

sent him up to me and departed on their affairs. I was shut up in my quarters with a bronchial cough, and glad to have something fresh to look at, something new to play with. Manuel filled the bill ; Manuel was very welcome. He was toward fifty years old, tall, slender, with a slight stoop—an artificial stoop, a deferential stoop, a stoop rigidified by long habit—with face of European mould ; short hair intensely black ; gentle black eyes, timid black eyes indeed ; complexion very dark, nearly black, in fact ; face smooth-shaven. He was bareheaded and barefooted and was never otherwise while his week with us lasted ; his clothing was European, cheap, flimsy, and showed much wear.

He stood before me and inclined his head (and body) in the pathetic Indian way, touching his forehead with the finger-ends of his right hand, in salute. I said :

‘Manuel, you are evidently Indian, but you seem to have a Spanish name when you put it all together. How is that ?’

A perplexed look gathered in his face ; it was plain that he had not understood—but he didn’t let on. He spoke back placidly :

‘Name Manuel. Yes, master.’

‘I know ; but how did you *get* the name ?’

‘Oh, yes, I suppose. Think happen so. Father same name, not mother.’

I saw that ; I must simplify my language and spread my words apart if I would be understood by this English scholar.

'Well—then—how—did—your—father—get—his—name ?'

'Oh, he'—brightening a little—'he Christian—Portygee ; live in Goa ; I born Goa ; mother not Portygee, mother native—high-caste Brahmin—Coolin Brahmin ; highest caste ; no other so high caste. I high-caste Brahmin, too. Christian, too, same like father ; high-caste Christian Brahmin, master—Salvation Army.'

All this haltingly, and with difficulty. Then he had an inspiration, and began to pour out a flood of words that I could make nothing of ; so I said—

'There—don't do that. I can't understand Hindostani.'

'Not Hindostani, master—English. Always I speaking English sometimes when I talking every day all the time at you.'

'Very well, stick to that ; that is intelligible. It is not up to my hopes, it is not up to the promise of the recommendations, still it is English and I understand it. Don't elaborate it ; I don't like elaborations when they are crippled by uncertainty of touch.'

'Master ?'

'Oh, never mind ; it was only a random thought ; I don't expect you to understand it. How did you get your English ; is it an acquirement, or just a gift of God ?'

After some hesitation—piously :

'Yes, He very good. Christian god very good, Hindoo god very good, too. Two million Hindoo god, one Christian god—make two million and one. All mine ; two million and one god. I got a plenty. Sometime I pray all time at those, keep it up, go all time every day, give something at shrine, all good for me, make me better man ; good for me, good for my family, dam good.'

Then he had another inspiration and went rambling off into fervent confusions and incoherencies, and I had to stop him again. I thought we had talked enough, so I told him to go to the bath room and clean it up and remove the slops—this to get rid of him. He went away, seeming to understand, and got out some of my clothes and began to brush them. I repeated my desire several times, simplifying and resimplifying it, and at last he got the idea. Then he went away and put a coolie at the work, and explained that he would lose caste if he did it himself ; it would be pollution, by the law of his caste, and it would cost him a deal of fuss and trouble to purify himself and accomplish his rehabilitation. He said that that kind of work was strictly forbidden to persons of caste, and as strictly restricted to the very bottom layer of Hindoo Society—the despised *sudra* ( the toiler, the labourer ).

Manuel was a failure, poor old fellow. His age was against him. He was desperately slow and phenomenally forgetful. When he went three blocks on an errand he would be gone two hours and then forget what it was he went for. When he packed a trunk, it took him for ever, and the trunk's contents were

an unimaginable chaos when he got done. He couldn't wait satisfactorily at table—a prime defect, for if you haven't your own servant in an Indian hotel, you are likely to have a slow time of it and go away hungry. We couldn't understand his English, he couldn't understand ours; and when we found that he couldn't understand his own, it seemed time for us to part. I had to discharge him; there was no help for it. But I did it as kindly as I could, and as gently. We must part, I said, but I hoped we should meet again in a better world. It was not true but it was only a little thing to say, and it saved his feelings and cost me nothing.

But now that he was gone, and was off my mind and heart, my spirits began to rise at once, and I was soon feeling brisk and ready to go out and have adventures. Then his newly hired successor flitted in, touched his forehead, and began to fly around here, there and everywhere, on his velvet feet, and in five minutes he had everything in the room 'ship-shape and Bristol fashion,' as the sailors say, and was standing at the salute, waiting for orders. Dear me, what a rustler he was, what a refreshment he was, after the slumbrous ways of Manuel, poor old slug. All my heart, all my affection, all my admiration, went out spontaneously to this frisky little forked thing, this compact and compressed incarnation of energy and force and promptness and celerity and confidence, this smart, smily, engaging, shiny-eyed little devil, ferruled on his upper end by a gleaming fire-coal of a fez with a red-hot tassel dangling from it. I said with deep satisfaction—

'You'll suit. What is your name?'

He reeled it mellowly off.

‘Let me see if I can make a selection out of it—for business uses, I mean ; we will keep the rest for Sundays. Give it to me in instalments.’

He did it. But there did not seem to be any short ones, except *Mousa*—which suggested mouse. It was out of character ; it was too soft, too quiet, too conservative ; it didn’t fit his splendid style. I considered, and said—

‘Mousa is short enough, but I don’t quite like it. It seems colourless—inharmonious—inadequate ; and I am sensitive to such things. How do you think Satan would do ?’

‘Yes, Master. Satan do wair good.’

It was his way of saying ‘very good.’

There was a rap at the door. Satan covered the ground with a single skip ; there was a word or two of Hindostani, then he disappeared. Three minutes later he was before me again militarily erect, and waiting for me to speak first.

‘What is it, Satan ?’

‘God want to see you.’

‘Who ?’

‘God. I show him up, master ?’

‘Why, this is so unusual, that—that—well, you see—indeed I am so unprepared—I mean—well, I don’t quite know what I *do* mean. Dear me, can’t

you explain ? Don't you see that this is a most ex——'

' Here his card, master.'

Wasn't it curious—and amazing, and tremendous, and all that ? Such a Personage going around calling on such as I, and sending up his card, like a mortal—sending it up by Satan. It was a bewildering collision of the impossibles. But this was the land of the Arabian Nights, this was India ! and what is it that cannot happen in India ?

We had the interview. Satan was right—the Visitor was indeed a god in the conviction of his multitudinous followers, and was worshipped by them in sincerity and humble adoration. They are troubled by no doubts as to his divine origin and office. They believe in him, they pray to him, they make offerings to him, they buy of him remission of sins ; to them his person, together with everything connected with it, is sacred ; from his barber they buy the parings of his nails and set them in gold and wear them as precious amulets.

I tried to seem tranquilly conversational and at rest, but I was not. Would you have been ? I was in a suppressed frenzy of excitement and curiosity, and glad wonder. I could not keep my eyes off him, I was looking upon a *god* ; an actual god, a recognised and accepted god ; and every detail of his person and his dress had a consuming interest for me. And the thought went floating through my head, ' He is worshipped—think of it—he is not a recipient of the pale homage called compliment, wherewith the

highest human clay must make shift to be satisfied, but of an infinitely richer spiritual food: adoration, worship!—men and women lay their cares and their griefs and their broken hearts at his feet; and he gives them his peace, and they go away healed.’

It is a land of surprises—India! I had had my ambitions—I had hoped, and almost expected, to be read by kings and presidents and emperors—but I had never looked so high as That. It would be false modesty to pretend that I was not inordinately pleased. I was. I was much more pleased than I should have been with a compliment from a man.

He remained half an hour, and I found him a most courteous and charming gentleman. The godship has been in his family a good while, but I do not know how long. He is a Mohammedan deity; by earthly rank he is a prince;—not an Indian but a Persian prince. He is a direct descendant of the Prophet’s line. He is comely; also young—for a god; not forty, perhaps not above thirty-five years old. He wears his immense honours with tranquil grace, and with a dignity proper to his awful calling. He speaks English with the ease and purity of a person born to it. I think I am not overstating this. He was the only god I had ever seen, and I was very favourably impressed. When he rose to say good-bye, the door swung open and I caught the flash of a red fez, and heard these words, reverently said—

‘Satan see God out?’

‘Yes.’ And these mis-mated beings passed from view—Satan in the lead and the Other following after.



### CHAPTER III.

The next picture in my mind is Government House, on Malabar Point, with the wide sea view from the windows and broad balconies; abode of His Excellency, the Governor of the Bombay Presidency—a residence which is European in everything but the guards and servants, and is a home and a palace of state harmoniously combined.

That was England, the English civilisation, the modern civilisation—with the quiet elegances and quiet colours and quiet tastes and quiet dignity that are the outcome of the modern cultivation. And following it came a picture of the ancient civilisation of India—an hour in the mansion of a prince: Kumar Shri Samatsinhji Bahadur of the Palitana State. The young lad his heir was with the prince; also, the lad's sister, a wee brown sprite, very pretty, very serious, very winning, delicately moulded, costumed like the daintiest butterfly, a dear little fairy-land princess, gravely willing to be friendly with the strangers, but in the beginning preferring to hold her father's hand until she could take stock of them and determine how far they were to be trusted. She must have been eight years old; so in the Indian order of things she would be a bride in three or four years from now, and then this free contact with the sun and the air and the other belongings of out-door nature and comradeship with visiting male folk would end, and she would shut herself up in the zenana for life, like her mother, and by inherited habit of mind would be happy in that seclusion and not look upon it as an irksome restraint and a weary captivity.

The game which the prince amuses his leisure with—however, never mind it, I should not be able to describe it intelligibly. I tried to get an idea of it while my wife and daughter visited the princess in the zenana, a lady of charming graces and a fluent speaker of English, but I did not make it out. It is a complicated game, and I believe it is said that nobody can learn to play it well but an Indian. And I was not able to learn how to wind a turban. It seemed a simple art and easy; but that was a deception. It is a piece of thin, delicate stuff, a foot wide or more, and forty or fifty feet long; and the exhibitor of the art takes one end of it in his two hands, and winds it in and out, intricately about his head, twisting it as he goes, and in a minute or two the thing is finished, and is neat and symmetrical and fits as snugly as a mould.

We were interested in the wardrobe and the jewels, and in the silverware and its grace of shape and beauty and delicacy of ornamentation. The silverware is kept locked up, except at meal times, and none but the chief butler and the prince have keys to the safe. I did not clearly understand why, but it was not for the protection of the silver. It was either to protect the prince from the contamination which his caste would suffer if the vessels were touched by low-caste hands, or it was to protect his highness from poison. Possibly it was both.

Ceremonials are always interesting; and I noted that the Indian good-morning is a ceremonial, whereas ours doesn't amount to that. In salutation, the son reverently touches the father's forehead with a small silver instrument tipped with vermilion paste which

leaves a red spot there, and in return the son receives the father's blessing. Our good-morning is well enough for the rowdy West, perhaps, but would be too brusque for the soft and ceremonious East.

After being properly necklaced, according to custom, with great garlands made of yellow flowers, and provided with betel nut to chew, this pleasant visit closed, and we passed thence to a scene of a different sort: from this glow of colour and this sunny life to those grim receptacles of the Parsee dead, the Towers of Silence. There is something stately about that name, and an impressiveness which sinks deep; the hush of death is in it. We have the Grave, the Tomb, the Mausoleum, God's Acre, the Cemetery: and association has made them eloquent with solemn meaning; but we have no name that is so majestic as that one, or lingers upon the ear with such deep and haunting pathos.

On lofty ground, in the midst of a paradise of tropical foliage and flowers, remote from the world and its turmoil and noise, there they stood—the Towers of Silence; and away below was spread the wide groves of cocoa palms, then the city, mile on mile, then the ocean with its fleets of creeping ships—all steeped in a stillness as deep as the hush that hallowed this high place of the dead. The vultures were there. They stood close together in a great circle all around the rim of a massive low tower—waiting; stood as motionless as sculptured ornaments, and indeed almost deceived one into the belief that that was what they were. Presently there was a slight stir among the score of persons present, and all moved reverently out of the path, and ceased from talking.

A funeral procession entered the great gate, marching two and two, and moved silently by, toward the Tower. The bearers of the body were separated by an interval of thirty feet from the mourners. They, and also the mourners, were draped all in pure white, and each couple of mourners was figuratively bound together by a piece of white rope or a handkerchief—though really they merely held the ends of it in their hands. When the mourners had reached the neighbourhood of the Tower—neither they nor any other human being but the bearers of the dead must approach within thirty feet of it—they turned and went back to one of the prayer-houses within the gates, to pray for the spirit of their dead. The bearers unlocked the Tower's sole door and disappeared from view within. In a little while they came out bringing the bier and the white covering-cloth, and locked the door again. Then the ring of vultures rose, flapping their wings, and swooped down into the Tower to devour the body.

The principle which underlies and orders everything connected with a Parsee funeral is Purity. By the tenets of the Zoroastrian religion, the elements, Earth, Fire and Water, are sacred, and must not be contaminated by contact with a dead body. Hence corpses must not be burned, neither must they be buried. None may touch the dead or enter the Towers where they repose except certain men who are officially appointed for that purpose. So far as is known, no human being, other than an official corpse-bearer has ever entered a Tower of Silence after its consecration. Just a hundred years ago a European rushed in behind the bearers and fed his brutal curiosity with

a glimpse of the forbidden mysteries of the place. This shabby savage's name is not given; his quality is also concealed. These two details, taken in connection with the fact that for his extraordinary offence the only punishment he got from the East India Company's Government was a solemn official 'reprimand,' suggest the suspicion that he was a European of consequence. The same public document which contained the reprimand gave warning that future offenders of his sort, if in the Company's service, would be dismissed; and if merchants, suffer revocation of license and exile to England.

The Towers are not tall, but are low in proportion to their circumference, like a gasometer. If you should fill a gasometer half way up with solid granite masonry, then drive a wide and deep well down through the centre of this mass of masonry, you would have the idea of a Tower of Silence. On the masonry surrounding the well the bodies lie, in shallow trenches which radiate like wheel spokes from the well. The trenches slant toward the well and carry into it the rain-fall. Under-ground drains, with charcoal filters in them, carry off this water from the bottom of the well.

When a skeleton has lain in the Tower exposed to the rain and the flaming sun a month, it is perfectly dry and clean. Then the same bearers that brought it there come gloved and take it up with tongs and throw it into the well. There it turns to dust. It is never seen again, never touched again, in the world. Other people separate their dead, and preserve and continue social distinctions in the grave—the skeletons

of kings and statesmen and generals in temples and pantheons proper to skeletons of their degree, and the skeletons of the commonplace and the poor in places suited to their meaner estate; but the Parsees hold that all men rank alike in death—all are humble, all poor, all destitute. In sign of their poverty they are sent to their grave naked; in sign of their equality, the bones of the rich, the poor, the illustrious and the obscure are flung into the common well together. At a Parsee funeral there are no vehicles; all concerned must walk, both rich and poor, howsoever great the distance to be travelled may be. In the wells of the Five Towers of Silence is mingled the dust of all the Parsee men and women and children who have died in Bombay and its vicinity during the two centuries which have elapsed since the Moham-medan conquerors drove the Parsees out of Persia and into that region of India.

The Parsees claim that their method of disposing of the dead is an effective protection of the living; that it disseminates no corruption, no impurities of any sort, no disease-germs; that no wrap, no garment which has touched the dead is allowed to touch the living afterward; that from the Towers of Silence nothing proceeds which can carry harm to the outside world. These are just claims, I think. As a sanitary measure, their system seems to be about the equivalent of cremation, and as sure. We are drifting slowly—but hopefully—toward cremation, in these days. It could not be expected that this progress should be swift, but if it be steady and continuous, even if slow, that will suffice. When cremation becomes the rule we shall cease to shudder at it; we

should shudder at burial if we allowed ourselves to think of what goes on in the grave.

The Parsees are a remarkable community. There are only about 60,000 in Bombay, and only about half as many as that in the rest of India ; but they make up in importance what they lack in numbers. They are highly educated, energetic, enterprising, progressive, rich, and the Jew himself is not more lavish or catholic in his charities and benevolences. The Parsees build and endow hospitals, for both men and animals ; and they and their womenkind keep an open purse for all great and good objects. They are a political force, and a valued support to the Government. They have a pure and lofty religion, and they preserve it in its integrity and order their lives by it.

We took a final sweep of the wonderful view of plain and city and ocean, and so ended our visit to the garden and the Towers of Silence ; and the last thing I noticed was another symbol—a voluntary symbol, this one ; it was a vulture standing on the sawed-off top of a tall and slender and branchless palm in an open space in the grounds ; he was perfectly motionless, and looked like a piece of sculpture on a pillar. And he had a mortuary look, too, which was in keeping with the place.

## CHAPTER IV

THE next picture that drifts across the field of my memory is one which is connected with religious things. We were taken by friends to see a Jain temple. It was small, and had many flags or streamers flying from poles standing above its roof ; and its little

battlements supported a great many small idols or images. Upstairs, inside, a solitary Jain was praying or reciting aloud, in the middle of the room. Our presence did not interrupt him, nor even incommode him or modify his fervour. Ten or twelve feet in front of him was the idol, a small figure in a sitting posture. It had the pinkish look of a wax doll, but lacked the doll's roundness of limb and approximation to correctness of form and justness of proportion. Mr. Gandhi explained everything to us. He was a delegate to the Chicago Fair Congress of Religions. It was lucidly done, in masterly English, but in time it faded from me, and now I have nothing left of that episode but an impression.

And thence we went to Mr. Premchand Roychand's bungalow, in Love Lane, Byculla, where an Indian prince was to receive a deputation of the Jain community, who desired to congratulate him upon a high honour lately conferred upon him by his sovereign, Victoria, Empress of India. She had made him a Knight of the Order of the Star of India. It would seem that even the grandest Indian prince is glad to add the modest title 'Sir' to his ancient Indian grandeurs, and is willing to do valuable service to win it. He will remit taxes liberally, and will spend money freely upon the betterment of the condition of his subjects if there is a knighthood to be gotten by it. And he will also do good work and a deal of it to get a gun added to the salute allowed him by the British Government. Every year the Empress distributes knighthoods and adds guns for public services done by princes. The salute of a small prince is three or four guns; princes of greater consequence have salutes



that run higher and higher, gun by gun,—oh, clear away up to eleven ; possibly more, but I did not hear of any above eleven-gun princes. I was told that when a four-gun prince gets a gun added, he is pretty troublesome for a while, till the novelty wears off, for he likes the music, and keeps hunting up pretexts to get himself saluted. It may be that supremely grand folk like the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Gaikwar of Baroda have more than eleven guns, but I don't know.

When we arrived at the bungalow, the large hall on the ground floor was already about full, and carriages were still flowing into the grounds. The company present made a fine show, an exhibition of human fireworks, so to speak, in the matters of costume and comminglings of brilliant colour. The variety of form noticeable in the display of turbans was remarkable. We were told that the explanation of this was, that this jain delegation was drawn from many parts of India, and that each man wore the turban that was in vogue in his own region. This diversity of turbans made a beautiful effect.

The most gorgeous costumes present were worn by some children. They seemed to blaze, so bright were the colours and so brilliant the jewels strung over the rich materials. These children were professional nautch-dancers, and looked like girls, but they were boys. They got up by ones and twos and fours, and danced and sang to an accompaniment of weird music. Their posturings and gesturings were elaborate and graceful, but their voices were stringently raspy and unpleasant, and there was a good deal of monotony about the tune.

By and by there was a burst of shouts and cheers outside, and the prince with his train entered in fine dramatic style. He was a stately man, he was ideally costumed, and fairly festooned with ropes of gems; some of the ropes were of pearls, some were of uncut great emeralds—emeralds renowned in Bombay for their quality and value. Their size was a marvel, and they were enticing to the eye, those rocks. A boy—a princeling—was with the prince, and he also was a radiant exhibition.

The ceremonies were not tedious. The prince strode to his throne with the port and majesty—and the sternness—of a Julius Caesar coming to receive and receipt for a back-country kingdom and have it over and get out, and no fooling. There was a throne for the young prince, too; and the two sat there, side by side, with their officers grouped at either hand and most accurately and creditably reproducing the pictures which one sees in the books—pictures which people in the prince's line of business have been furnishing ever since Solomon received the Queen of Sheba and showed her his things. The chief of the Jain delegation read his paper of congratulations, then pushed it into a beautifully engraved silver cylinder, which was delivered with ceremony into the prince's hands and at once delivered by him without ceremony into the hands of an officer. I will copy the address here.

'Your Highness,—We the undersigned members of the Jain community of Bombay have the pleasure to approach your Highness with the expression of our heartfelt congratulations on the recent conference on your Highness of the Knighthood of the Most Exal-

ted Order of the Star of India. Ten years ago we had the pleasure and privilege of welcoming your Highness to this city under circumstances which have made a memorable epoch in the history of your State, for had it not been for a generous and reasonable spirit that your Highness displayed in the negotiations between the Palitana Durbar and the Jain community, the conciliatory spirit that animated our people could not have borne fruit. That was the first step in your Highness's administration, and it fitly elicited the praise of the Jain community and of the Bombay Government. A decade of your Highness's administration, combined with the abilities, training and acquirements that your Highness brought to bear upon it, has justly earned for your Highness the unique and honourable distinction—the Knighthood of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India, which we understand your Highness is the first to enjoy among chiefs of your Highness's rank and standing. And we assure your Highness that for this mark of honour that has been conferred on you by her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen-Empress, we feel no less proud than your Highness. Establishment of commercial factories, schools, hospitals etc, by your Highness in your State has marked your Highness's career during these ten years, and we trust that your Highness will be spared to rule over your people with wisdom and foresight, and to foster the many reforms that your Highness has been pleased to introduce in your State. We again offer your Highness our warmest felicitations for the honour that has been conferred on you. We beg to remain your Highness's obedient servants.'

After the address, the prince responded with snap and brevity, spoke a moment with half a dozen guests in English and with an official or two in an Indian tongue, then the garlands were distributed as usual, and the function came to an end.

## CHAPTER V.

TOWARD midnight, that night, there was another function. This was a Hindoo wedding—no, I think it was a betrothal ceremony. Always before, we had driven through streets that were multitudinous and tumultuous with picturesque life, but now there was nothing of that. We seemed to move through a city of the dead. There was hardly a suggestion of life in those still and vacant streets. Everywhere on the ground lay sleeping men—hundreds and hundreds. They lay stretched at full length and tightly wrapped in blankets, heads and all. Their attitudes and their rigidity counterfeited death. The plague was not in Bombay then, but it is devastating the city now. The shops are deserted, now, half of the people have fled and of the remainder the smitten perish by shoals every day. No doubt the city looks now in the daytime as it looked then at night. When we had pierced deep into the Indian quarter and were threading its narrow dim lanes, we had to go carefully, for men were stretched asleep all about and there was hardly room to drive between them. And every now and then a swarm of rats would scamper across past the horses' feet in the vague light—the forbears of the rats that are carrying the plague from house to house in Bombay now. The shops were but sheds, little booths open to the street; and the goods had been

removed, and on the counters families were sleeping, usually with an oil lamp present. Recurrent dead-watches, it looked like.

But at last we turned a corner and saw a great glare of light ahead. It was the home of the bride, wrapped in a perfect conflagration of illuminations,—mainly gas-work designs, gotten up specially for the occasion. Within was abundance of brilliancy—flames, costumes, colours, decorations, mirrors—it was another Aladdin show.

The bride was a trim and comely little thing of twelve years, dressed as we would dress a boy, though more expensively than we should do it, of course. She moved about, very much at her ease, and stopped and talked with the guests and allowed her wedding jewelery to be examined. It was very fine. Particularly a rope of great diamonds, a lovely thing to look at and handle. It had a great emerald hanging to it.

The bridegroom was not present. He was having betrothal festivities of his own at his father's house. As I understood it, he and the bride were to entertain company every night and nearly all night for a week or more, then get married, if alive. Both of the children were a little elderly, as brides and grooms go in India—twelve; they ought to have been married a year or two sooner; still, to a stranger twelve seems quite young enough.

A while after midnight a couple of celebrated and high-priced nautch-girls appeared in the gorgeous place, and danced and sang. With them were men

who played upon strange instruments which made uncanny noises of a sort to make one's flesh creep. One of these instruments was a pipe, and to its music the girls went through a performance which represented snake charming. It seemed a doubtful sort of music to charm anything with, but an Indian gentleman assured me that snakes like it and will come out of their holes and listen to it with every evidence of refreshment and gratitude. He said that at an entertainment in his grounds once, the pipe brought out half a dozen snakes, and the music had to be stopped before they would be persuaded to go. Nobody wanted their company, for they were bold, familiar and dangerous ; but no one would kill them, of course, for it is sinful for a Hindoo to kill any kind of a creature.

We withdrew from the festivities at two in the morning. Another picture, then—but it has lodged itself in my memory rather as a stage-scene than as a reality. It is of a porch, and short flight of steps crowded with dark faces and ghostly-white draperies flooded with the strong glare from the dazzling concentration of illuminations ; and midway of the steps one conspicuous figure for accent—a turbaned giant, with a name according to his size : Rao Bahadur Baskirao Balinkanje Pitale, Vakeel to his Highness the Gaikwar of Baroda. Without him the picture would not have been complete ; and if his name had been merely Smith, *he* wouldn't have answered. Close at hand on house-fronts on both sides of the narrow street were illuminations of a kind commonly employed by the Indians—scores of glass tumblers (containing tapers) fastened a few inches apart all over great

lattice frames, forming starry constellation which showed out vividly against their black backgrounds. As we drew away into the distance down the dim lanes, the illuminations gathered together into a single mass, and glowed out of the enveloping darkness like a sun.

Then again the deep silence, the skurrying rats, the dim forms stretched everywhere on the ground; and on either hand those open booths counterfeiting sepulchres, with counterfeit corpses sleeping motionless in the flicker of the counterfeit death-lamps. And now, a year later, when I read the cablegrams I seem to be reading of what I myself partly saw—saw before it happened—in a prophetic dream, as it were. One cablegram says, ‘Business in the town is about suspended. Except the wailing and the tramp of the funerals there is but little life or movement. The closed shops exceed in number those that remain open.’ Another says that 325,000 of the people have fled the city and are carrying the plague to the country. Three days later comes the news, ‘The population is reduced by *half*.’ The refugees have carried the disease to Karachi: ‘220 cases, 214 deaths.’ A day or two later, ‘52 fresh cases, *all* of which proved fatal,’

The plague carries with it a terror which no other disease can excite; for of all diseases known to men it is the deadliest—by far the deadliest. ‘Fifty-two fresh cases—*all* fatal.’ It is the Black Death alone that slays like that. We can all imagine, after a fashion, the desolation of a plague-stricken city, and the stupor of stillness broken at intervals by distant bursts of wailing, marking the passing of funerals, here and there and yonder, but I suppose it is not

possible for us to realise to ourselves the nightmare of dread and fear that possesses the living who are present in such a place and cannot get away. That half million fled from Bombay in a wild panic suggests to us something of what they were feeling, but perhaps not even they could realise what the half million were feeling whom they left stranded behind to face the stalking horror without chance of escape.

## CHAPTER VI

We are making preparations for travel. Mainly the preparations are purchases of bedding. This is to be used in sleeping berths in the trains ; in private houses sometimes ; and in nine-tenths of the hotels. It is not realisable ; and yet it is true. It is a survival ; an apparently unnecessary thing which in some strange way has outlived the conditions which once made it necessary. It comes down from a time when the railway and the hotel did not exist ; when the occasional white traveller went horseback or by bullock-cart, and stopped overnight in the small dakh-bungalow provided at easy distances by the Government—a shelter merely, and nothing more. He had to carry bedding along, or do without. The dwellings of the English residents are spacious, comfortable, and commodiously furnished, and surely it must be an odd sight to see half a dozen guests come filing into such a place dumping blankets and pillows here and there and everywhere. But custom makes incongruous things congruous.

One buys the bedding, with waterproof hold-all for it, at almost any shop—there is no difficulty about it.



*January 30.*—What a spectacle the railway station was, at train time ! It was a very large station, yet when we arrived it seemed as if the whole world was present—half of it inside, the other half outside, and both halves, bearing mountainous headloads of bedding and other freight, trying simultaneously to pass each other, in opposing floods, in one narrow door. These opposing floods were patient, gentle, long-suffering Indians with whites scattered among them at rare intervals ; and wherever a white man's servant appeared, *that* Indian seemed to have put aside his natural gentleness for the time and invested himself with the white man's privilege of making a way for himself by promptly shoving all intervening things out of it. In these exhibitions of authority Satan was scandalous. He was probably a Thug, in one of his former incarnations.

Inside the great station, tides upon tides of rainbow costumed men swept along, this way and that, in massed and bewildering confusion, eager, anxious, belated, distressed ; and washed up to the long trains and flowed into them with their packs and bundles, and disappeared, followed at once by the next wash, the next wave. And here and there, in the midst of this hurly-burly, and seemingly undisturbed by it, sat great groups of Indians on the bare stone floor— young, slender brown women ; old, gray, wrinkled women ; little soft brown babies ; old men, young men, boys ; all poor people, but all the females among them both big and little, bejewelled with cheap and showy nose-rings, toe-rings leglets and armlets, these things constituting all their wealth, no doubt. These silent crowds sat there with their humble bundles and baskets

and small household gear about them, and patiently waited—for what? A train that was to start at some time or other during the day or night. They hadn't timed themselves well, but that was no matter—the thing had been so ordered from on high, therefore why worry? There was plenty of time, hours and hours of it, and the thing that was to happen would happen, there was no hurrying it.

When we reached our car, Satan and Barney had already arrived there with their train of porters carrying bedding and parasols and cigar boxes, and were at work. It was a car that promised comfort; indeed luxury. It was built of the plainest and cheapest partially-smoothed boards, with a coating of dull paint on them, and there was nowhere a thought of decoration. The floor was bare, but would not long remain so when the dust should begin to fly. Across one end of the compartment ran a netting for the accommodation of hand-baggage; at the other end was a door which would shut, upon compulsion, but wouldn't stay shut; it opened into a narrow little closet which had a washbowl in one end of it and a place to put a towel, in case you had one with you—and you would be sure to have towels, because you buy them with the bedding, knowing that the railway doesn't furnish them. On each side of the car, and running fore and aft, was a broad leathercovered sofa—to sit on in the day and sleep on at night. Over each sofa hung, by straps, a wide, flat, leather-covered shelf—to sleep on. In the daytime you can hitch it up against the wall, out of the way—and then you have a big unencumbered and most comfortable room to spread out in. No car in any

country is quite its equal for comfort (and privacy), I think. For usually there are but two persons in it; and even when there are four, there is but little sense of impaired privacy. Our own cars at home can surpass the railway world in all details but that one; they have no cosiness; there are too many people together.

At the foot of each sofa was a side-door, for entrance and exit.

Along the whole length of the sofa on each side of the car ran a row of large single-plate windows, of a blue tint—blue to soften the bitter glare of the sun and protect one's eyes from torture. These could be let down out of the way when one wanted the breeze. In the roof were two oil lamps which gave a light strong enough to read by; each had a green cloth attachment by which it could be covered when the light should be no longer needed.

While we talked outside with friends, Barney and Satan placed the hand-baggage, books, fruits and soda-bottles in the racks, the hold-alls and heavy baggage in the closet, hung the overcoats and sun-helmets and towels on the hooks, hoisted the two bed-shelves up out of the way, then shouldered their bedding and retired to the third-class.

About nine in the evening, while we halted awhile at a station, Barney and Satan came and undid the clumsy big hold-alls, and spread the bedding on the sofas—inmattresses, sheets, gay coverlets, pillows, all complete. Then they closed the communicating door, nimbly tidied up our place, put the night-clothing on the beds and the slippers under them, then returned to their own quarters.

*January 31.*—It was novel and pleasant, and I stayed awake as long as I could, to enjoy it and to read about those strange people, the Thugs. In my sleep they remained with me, and tried to strangle me. The leader of the gang was that giant Hindoo who was such a picture in the strong light when we were leaving those Hindoo betrothal festivities at two o'clock in the morning—Rao Bahadur Baskirao Balinkanje Pitale, Vakeel to the Gaikwar of Baroda. It was he that brought me the invitation from his master to go to Baroda and lecture to that prince—and now he was misbehaving in my dreams. But all things can happen in dreams.

*Baroda.*—Arrived at seven this morning. The dawn was just begining to show. It was forlorn to have to turn out in a strange place at such a time, and the blinking lights in the station made it seem night still. But the gentlemen who had come to receive us were there with their servants, and they made quick work ; there was no lost time. We were soon outside and moving swiftly through the soft grey light, and presently were comfortably housed—with more servants to help than we were used to, and with rather embarrassingly important officials to direct them. But it was custom ; they spoke Ballarat English, their bearing was charming and hospitable, and so all went well.

Breakfast was a satisfaction. Across the lawns was visible in the distance through the open window an Indian well, with two oxen tramping leisurly up and down long inclines, drawing water ; and out of the stillness came the suffering screech of the machin-

ery—not quite musical, and yet soothingly melancholy and dreamy and reposeful—a wail of lost spirits one might imagine. And commemorative and reminiscent, perhaps ; for of course the Thugs used to throw people down that well when they were done with them.

After breakfast the day began—a sufficiently busy one. We were driven by winding roads through a vast park, with noble forests of great trees, and with tangles and jungles of lovely growths of a humbler sort ; and at one place three large grey apes came out and pranced across the road—a good deal of a surprise, and an unpleasant one, for such creatures belong in the menagerie, and they look artificial and out of place in a wilderness.

We came to the city, by and by, and drove all through it. Intensely Indian, it was, and crumbly, and mouldering, and immemorially old, to all appearance. And the houses—oh, indescribably quaint and curious they were, with their fronts an elaborate lace-work of intricate and beautiful wood-carvings, and now and then further adorned with rude pictures of elephants and princes and gods done in shouting colours ; and all the ground-floors along these cramped and narrow lanes occupied as shops—shops unbelievably small, and impossibly packed with merchantable rubbish, and with nine-tenths-naked Indians squatting at their work of hammering, pounding, brazing, soldering, sewing, designing, cooking, measuring out grain, grinding it, repairing idols—and then the swarm of ragged and noisy humanity under the horses' feet and everywhere, and the pervading reek and fume and smell ! It was all wonderful and delightful.

Imagine a file of elephants marching through such a crevice of a street and scraping the paint off both sides of it with their hides. How big they must look, and how little they must make the houses look; and when the elephants are in their glittering court costume, what a contrast they must make with the humble and sordid surroundings. And when a mad elephant goes raging through, belting right and left with his trunk, how do these swarms of people get out of the way? I suppose, it is a thing which happens now and then in the mad season (for elephants have a mad season).

I wonder how old the town is. There are patches of building—massive structures, monuments, apparently—that are so battered and worn, and seemingly so tired and so burdened with the weight of age, and so dulled and stupefied with trying to remember things they forgot before history began, that they give one the feeling that they must have been a part of original Creation. This is indeed one of the oldest of the princedoms of India, and has always been celebrated for its pomps and splendours, and for the wealth of its princes.

OUT of the town again; a long drive through open country, by winding roads among secluded villages nestling in the inviting shade of tropic vegetation; a Sabbath stillness everywhere, sometimes a pervading sense of solitude, but always barefoot Indians gliding by like spirits, without sound of footfall, and others in the distance dissolving away and vanishing like the creatures of dreams. Now and then a string of stately camels passed by—always interesting things to look

at—and they were velvet-shod by nature, and made no noise. Indeed there were no noises of any sort in this paradise. Yes, once there was one, for a moment, a file of convicts passed along in charge of an officer, and we caught the soft clink of their chains. In a retired spot, resting himself under a tree, was a holy person—a naked fakeer, thin and skinny, and whitey-gray all over with ashes.

By and by to the elephant stables, and I took a ride ; but it was by request—I did not ask for it, and didn't want it; but I took it, because otherwise they would have thought I was afraid, which I was. The elephant kneels down, by command—one end of him at a time—and you climb the ladder and get into the howdah, and then he gets up, one end at a time, just as a ship gets up over a wave ; and after that, as he strides monstrosly about, his motion is much like a ship's motion. The mahout bores into the back of his head with a great iron prod, and you wonder at his temerity and at the elephant's patience, and you think that perhaps the patience will not last ; but it does, and nothing happens. The mahout talks to the elephant in a low voice all the time, and the elephant seems to understand it all and to be pleased with it ; and he obeys every order in the most contented and docile way. Among these twenty-five elephants were two which were larger than any I had ever seen before, and if I had thought I could learn to not be afraid, I would have taken one of them while the police were not looking.

In the howdah-house there were many howdahs that were made of silver, one of gold, and one of old ivory, and equipped with cushions and canopies of rich

and costly stuffs. The wardrobe of the elephants was there, too : vast velvet covers stiff and heavy with gold embroidery ; and bells of silver and gold ; and ropes of these metals for fastening the things on—harness, so to speak ; and monster hoops of massive gold for the elephant to wear on his ankles when he is out in procession on business of state.

But we did not see the treasury of Crown jewels, and that was a disappointment, for in mass and richness it ranks only second in India. By mistake we were taken to see the new palace instead, and we used up the last remnant of our spare time there. It was a pity, too ; for the new palace is mixed modern American-European, and has not a merit except costliness. The old palace is Oriental, and charming, and in consonance with the country. The old palace would still be great if there were nothing of it but the spacious and lofty hall where the durbars are held. It is not a good place to lecture in, on account of the echoes, but it is a good place to hold durbars in and regulate the affairs of a kingdom, and that is what it is for. If I had it I would have a durbar every day, instead of once or twice a year.

We failed to see the jewels, but we saw the gold cannon and the silver one—they seemed to be six-pounders. They were not designed for business, but for salutes upon rare and particularly important State occasions. An ancestor of the present Gaikwar had the silver one made, and a subsequent ancestor had the gold one made in order to outdo him. This sort of artillery is in keeping with the traditions of Baroda, which was of old famous for style and show. It



used to entertain visiting rajahs and viceroys with tiger-fights, elephant-fights, illuminations, and elephant-processions of the most glittering and gorgeous character.

## CHAPTER VII.

*On the train:*—Fifty years ago, when I was a boy in the then remote and sparsely peopled Mississippi valley, vague tales and rumours of a mysterious body of professional murderers came wandering in from a country which was constructively as far from us as the constellations blinking in space—India; vague tales and rumours of a sect called Thugs, who waylaid travellers in lonely places and killed them for the contentment of a god whom they worshipped; tales which everybody liked to listen to, and nobody believed—except with reservations. It was considered that the stories had gathered bulk on their travels. The matter died down and a lull followed. Then Eugene Sue's 'Wandering Jew' appeared, and made great talk for a while. One character in it was a chief of Thugs—'Feringhea.'—a mysterious and terrible Indian who was as slippery and sly as a serpent, and as deadly; and he stirred up the Thug interest once more. But it did not last. It presently died again—this time to stay dead.

The source whence the Thug tales mainly came was a Government Report, and Government Reports have no general circulation. They are distributed to the few, and are not always read by those few. I heard of this Report for the first time a day or two ago, and borrowed it. It is full of fascinations, and

it turns those dim, dark fairy tales of my boyhood days into realities.

This Report was made in 1839 by Major Sleeman, of the Indian Service, and was printed in Calcutta in 1840. To Major Sleeman was given the general superintendence of the giant task of ridding India of Thuggee, and he and his seventeen assistants accomplished it. It was the Augean Stables over again.

Thuggee became known to the British authorities in India about 1810, but its wide prevalence was not suspected; it was not regarded as a serious matter, and no systematic measures were taken for its suppression until about 1830. About that time Major Sleeman captured Eugene Sue's Thug-chief, 'Feringhea,' and got him to turn king's evidence. The revelations were so stupefying that Sleeman was not able to believe them. Sleeman thought he knew every criminal within his jurisdiction, and that the worst of them were merely thieves; but Feringhea told him that he was in reality living in the midst of a swarm of professional murderers; that they had been all about him for many years, and that they buried their dead close by. These seemed insane tales; but Feringhea said, 'Come and see'—and he took him to a grave and dug up a hundred dead bodies, and told him all the circumstances of the killings, and named the Thugs who had done the work. It was a staggering business. Sleeman captured some of these Thugs and proceeded to examine them separately, and with proper precautions against collusion. The evidence gathered proved the truth of what Feringhea had said, and also revealed

the fact that gangs of Thugs were plying their trade all over India. The astonished Government now took hold of Thuggee, and for ten years made systematic and relentless war upon it, and finally destroyed it. Gang after gang was captured, tried, and punished. The Thugs were harried and hunted from one end of India to the other. The Government got all their secrets out of them; and also got the names of the members of the hands, and recorded them in a book, together with their birthplaces and places of residence.

The Thugs were worshippers of Bhowanee; and to this god they sacrificed anybody that came handy; but they kept the dead man's things themselves, for the god cared for nothing but the corpse. Men were initiated into the sect with solemn ceremonies. Then they were taught how to strangle a person with the sacred choke-cloth, but were not allowed to perform officially with it until after long practice. No half-educated strangler could choke a man to death quickly enough to keep him from uttering a sound, a muffled scream, gurgle, gasp, moan, or something of the sort; but the expert's work was instantaneous: the cloth was whipped around the victim's neck, there was a sudden twist, and the head fell silently forward, the eyes starting from the sockets; and all was over. The Thug carefully guarded against resistance. It was usual to get the victims to sit down, for that was the handiest position for business.

If the Thug had planned India himself it could not have been more conveniently arranged for the needs of his occupation. There were no public conveyances. There were no conveyances for hire. The

traveller went on foot or in a bullock-cart or on a horse which he bought for the purpose. As soon as he was out of his own little State or principality he was among strangers; nobody knew him, nobody took note of him, and from that time his movements could no longer be traced. He did not stop in towns or villages, but camped outside of them and sent his servants in to buy provisions. There were no habitations between villages. Whenever he was between villages he was an easy prey, particularly as he usually travelled by night, to avoid the heat. He was always being overtaken by strangers who offered him the protection of their company or asked for the protection of his—and these strangers were often Thugs, as he presently found out to his cost. The landholders, the police, the petty princes, the village officials, the customs officers, were in many cases protectors and harbourers of the Thugs, and betrayed travellers to them for a share of the spoil. At first this condition of things made it next to impossible for the Government to catch the marauders; they were spirited away by these watchful friends. All through a vast continent, thus infested, helpless people of every caste and kind moved along the paths and trails in couples and groups silently by night, carrying the commerce of the country—treasure, jewels, money, and petty batches of silks, spices, and all manner of wares. It was a paradise for the Thug.

When the autumn opened, the Thugs began to gather together by pre-concert. Other people had to have interpreters at every turn, but not the Thugs; *they* could talk together, no matter how far apart they were born, for they had a language of their own, and

they had secret signs by which they knew each other for Thugs and they were always friends. Even their diversities of religion and caste were sunk in devotion to their calling, and the Moslem and the high-caste and low-caste Hindoo were staunch and affectionate brothers in Thuggery.

When a gang had been assembled, they had religious worship, and waited for an omen. They had definite notions about the omens. The cries of certain animals were good omens, the cries of certain other creatures were bad omens. A bad omen would stop proceedings and send the men home.

The sword and the strangling-cloth were sacred emblems. The Thugs worshipped the sword at home before going out to the assembling-place, the strangling-cloth was worshipped at the place of assembly. The chiefs of most of the bands performed the religious ceremonies themselves, but the *Kaets* delegated them to certain official stranglers (*Chaur*s). The rites of the *Kaets* were so holy that no one but the *Chaur* was allowed to touch the vessels and other things used in them.

Thug methods exhibit a curious mixture of caution and the absence of it: cold business calculation and sudden, unreflecting impulse; but there were two details which were constant, and not subject to caprice: patient persistence in following up the prey, and pitilessness when the time came to act.

Caution was exhibited in the strength of the bands. They never felt comfortable and confident unless their strength exceeded that of any party of travellers they were likely to meet by four or five

fold. Yet it was never their purpose to attack openly, but only when the victims were off their guard. When they got hold of a party of travellers, they often moved along in their company several days, using all manner of arts to win their friendship and get their confidence. At last, when this was accomplished to their satisfaction, the real business began. A few Thugs were privately detached and sent forward in the lark to select a good killing-place and *dig the graves*. When the rest reached that spot, a halt was called, for a rest or a smoke. The travellers were invited to sit. By signs, the chief appointed certain Thugs to sit down in front of the travellers as if to wait upon them, others to sit down beside them and engage them in conversation, and certain expert stranglers to stand behind the travellers and be ready when the signal was given. The signal was usually some commonplace remark, like 'Bring the tobacco.' Sometimes a considerable wait ensued after all the actors were in their places—the chief was biding his time, in order to make everything sure. Meantime the talk droned on, dim figures moved about in the dull night light, peace and tranquillity reigned, the travellers resigned themselves to the pleasant reposefulness and comfort of the situation, unconscious of the death-angels standing motionless at their backs. The time was ripe, now, and the signal came: 'Bring the tobacco.' There was a mute swift movement, all in the same instant the men at each victim's sides seized his hands, the man in front seized his feet and pulled, the man at his back whipped the cloth around his neck and gave it a twist—the head sunk forward, the tragedy was over. The bodies were stripped

and covered up in the graves, the spoil packed for transportation, then the Thugs gave pious thanks to Bhowanee and departed on further holy service.

The Report shows that the travellers moved in exceedingly small groups—twos, threes, fours, as a rule; a party with a dozen in it was rare. The Thugs themselves seem to have been the only people who moved in force. They went about in gangs of 10, 15, 25, 40, 60, 100, 150, 200, 250, and one gang of 310 is mentioned. Considering their numbers, their catch was not extraordinary—particularly when you consider that they were not in the least fastidious, but took anybody they could get, whether rich or poor, and sometimes even killed children. Now and then they killed women, but it was considered sinful to do it, and unlucky. The ‘season’ was six or eight months long. One season the half dozen Bundelkund and Gwalior gangs aggregated 712 men and they murdered 210 people. One season the Malwa and Kandeish gangs aggregated 702 men, and they murdered 232. One season the Kandesh and Berar gangs aggregated 963 men and they murdered 385 people.

A beggar is a holy creature, and some of the gangs spared him on that account, no matter how slack business might be; but other gangs slaughtered not only him, but even that sacredest of sacred creatures, the *fakeer*—that skin-and-bone thing that goes around naked and mats his bushy hair with dust and dirt, and so beflours his lean body with ashes that he looks like a spectre. Sometimes a fakeer trusted a shade too far in the protection of his sacredness. In the middle of a tally-sheet of Feringhea’s, who had

been out with forty Thugs, I find a case of the kind. After the killing of thirty-nine men and one woman, the fakeer appears on the scene.

‘Approaching Doregow, met three pundits; also a fakeer, mounted on a pony; he was plastered over with sugar to collect flies, and was covered with them. Drove off the fakeer, and killed the other three.

‘Leaving Doregow, the fakeer joined again, and went on in company to Raojana; met six khutries on their way from Bombay to Nagpore. Drove off the fakeer with stones, and killed the six men in camp and buried them in the grove.

‘Next day the fakeer joined again; made him leave at Mana. Beyond there, fell in with two kahars and a sepoy and came on towards the place selected for the murder. When near it, the fakeer came again. Losing all patience with him, gave Mithoo, one of the gang, five rupees to murder him and take the sin upon himself. All four were strangled, including the fakeer. Surprised to find among the fakeer’s effects thirty pounds of coral, three hundred and fifty strings of small pearls, fifteen strings of large pearls, and a gilt necklace.’

The cow is so sacred in India that to kill her keeper is an awful sacrilege, and even the Thugs recognised this; yet now and then the lust for blood was too strong, and so they did kill a few cowkeepers.

In one of these instances the witness who killed the cowherd said, ‘In Thuggee this is strictly forbidden, and is an act from which no good can come. I was ill of a fever for ten days afterward. I do believe



that evil will follow the murder of a man with a cow. If there be no cow it does not signify.' Another Thug said he held the cowherd's feet while this witness did the strangling. He felt no concern, 'because the bad fortune of such a deed is upon the strangler and not upon the assistants, even if there should be a hundred of them.'

There were thousands of Thugs roving over India constantly, during many generations. They made Thuggee a hereditary vocation and taught it to their sons and to their sons' sons. Boys were in full membership as early as sixteen years of age; veterans were still at work at seventy. What was the fascination, what was the impulse? Apparently it was partly piety, largely gain, and there is reason to suspect that the *sport* afforded was the chiefest fascination of all. Meadows Taylor makes a Thug in one of his books claim that the pleasure of killing men was the white man's beast-hunting instinct enlarged, ennobled. I will quote the passage :

THE Thug said :

'How many of you English are passionately devoted to sporting! Your days and months are passed in its excitement. A tiger, a panther, a buffalo or a hog rouses your utmost energies for its destruction—you even risk your lives in its pursuit. How much higher game is a Thug's !'

That must really be the secret of the rise and development of Thuggee. The joy of killing! the joy of seeing killing done! These are traits of the

human race at large. We white people are merely modified Thugs ; Thugs fretting under the restraints of a not very thick skin of civilisation ; Thugs who long ago enjoyed the slaughters of the Roman arena, and later the burning of doubtful Christians by authentic Christians in the public squares, and who now, with the Thugs of Spain and Nîmes, flock to enjoy the blood and misery of the bull ring. We have no tourists of either sex or any religion who are able to resist the delights of the bull ring when opportunity offers ; and we are all gentle Thugs in the hunting-season, and love to chase a tame rabbit and kill it.

There are many indications that the Thug often hunted men for the mere sport of it ; that the fright and pain of the quarry were no more to him than are the fright and pain of the rabbit or the stag to us ; and that he was no more ashamed of beguiling his game with deceptions and abusing its trust than are we when we have imitated a wild animal's call and shot it when it honoured us with its confidence and came to see what we wanted.

‘Madara, son of Nihal, and I (Ramzan) set out from Kotdee in the cold weather and followed the high road for about twenty days in search of travellers, until we came to Selem-pore, where we met a very old man going to the east. We won his confidence in this manner ; he carried a load which was too heavy for his old age ; I said to him, “You are an old man, I will aid you in carrying your load, as you are from my part of the country.” He said, “Very well, take me with you.” So we took him with us to Selem-pore, where we slept that night. We woke him next morning before dawn and set out, and at the distance

of three miles we seated him to rest while it was still very dark. Madara was ready behind him, and strangled him. He never spoke a word. He was about sixty or seventy years of age.

Another gang fell in with a couple of barbers and persuaded them to come along in their company by promising them the job of shaving the whole crew—thirty Thugs. At the place appointed for the murder, fifteen got shaved, and actually paid the barbers for their work. Then they killed them and took back the money.

A gang of forty-two Thugs came across two Brahmins and a shopkeeper on the road, beguiled them into a grove and got up a *concert* for their entertainment. While these poor fellows were listening to the music, the stranglers were standing behind them ; and at the proper moment for dramatic effect they applied the noose.

The most devoted fisherman must have a bite at least as often as once a week or his passion will cool and he will put up his tackle. The tiger-sportsman must find a tiger at least once a fortnight or he will get tired and quit. The elephant-hunter's enthusiasm will waste away little by little, and his zeal will perish at last if he plod around a month without finding a member of that noble family to assassinate.

But when the lust in the hunter's heart is for the noblest of all quarries, man, how different is the case ! and how watery and poor is the zeal and how childish the endurance of those other hunters by comparison. Then, neither hunger, nor thirst, nor

fatigue, nor deferred hope, nor monotonous disappointment, nor laden-footed lapse of time can conquer the hunter's patience or weaken the joy of his quest or cool the splendid rage of his desire. Of all the hunting-passions that burn in the breast of man, there is none that can lift him superior to discouragements like these but the one—the royal sport, the supreme sport, whose quarry is his brother. By comparison, tiger-hunting is a colourless poor thing, for all it has been so bragged about.

Why, the Thug was content to tramp patiently along, afoot, in the wasting heat of India, week after week, an average of nine or ten miles a day, if he might but hope to find game some time or other and refresh his longing soul with blood. Here is an instance :

‘I (Ramzan) and Hyder set out, for the purpose of strangling travellers, from Guddopore, and proceeded via the Fort of Julalabad, Newulgunge, Bangermow, on the banks of the Ganges ( upwards of 100 miles ), from whence we returned by another route. Still no travellers ! till we reached Bowaneegunge, where we fell in with a traveller, a boatman ; we inveigled him and about two miles east of there Hyder strangled him as he stood—for he was troubled and afraid, would not sit. We then made a long journey ( about 130 miles ) and reached Hussunpore Bundwa, where at the tank we fell in with a traveller—he slept there that night ; next morning we followed him and tried to win his confidence ; at a distance of two miles we endeavoured to induce him to sit down—but he would not, having become aware of us. I attempted to strangle him as he walked along,

but did not succeed ; both of us then fell upon him, he made a great outcry, "They are murdering me !", at length we strangled him and flung his body into a well. After this we returned to our homes, having been out a month and travelled about 260 miles. A total of two men murdered on the expedition.'

And here is another case—related by the terrible Fatty Khan, a man with a tremendous record :

'I, with three others, travelled for about forty-five days a distance of about 200 miles in search of victims along the highway to Bundwa and returned by Davodpore (another 200 miles) during which journey we had only one murder, which happened in this manner. Four miles to the east of Noubustaghat we fell in with a traveller, an old man. I, with Koshal and Hyder, inveigled him and accompanied him that day within three miles of Rampoor, where, after dark, in a lonely place, we got him to sit down and rest ; and while I kept him in talk, seated before him, Hyder behind strangled him ; he made no resistance. Koshal stabbed him under the arms and in the throat, and we flung the body into a running stream. We got about four or five rupees each. We then proceeded homewards. A total of one man murdered on this expedition.'

There. They tramped 400 miles, were gone about three months, and harvested four or five rupees apiece. But the mere pleasure of the hunt was sufficient. That was pay enough. They did no grumbling.

Every now and then in this big book one comes across that pathetic remark : 'We tried to get him to

sit down, but he would not.' It tells the whole story. Some accident had awakened the suspicion in him that these smooth friends who had been petting and coddling him and making him feel so safe and so fortunate after his forlorn and lonely wanderings were the dreaded Thugs ; and now their ghastly invitation to 'sit and rest' had confirmed its truth. He knew there was no help for him, and that he was looking his last upon earthly things, but 'he would not sit.' No, not that—it was too awful to think of !

There are a number of instances which indicate that when a man had once tasted the splendid joys of man-hunting he could not be content with the dull monotony of a crimeless life afterward. Example, from a Thug's testimony :

'We passed through to Kurnaul, where we found a former Thug named Junnoo, an old comrade of ours who had turned religious mendicant and become a disciple and holy. He came to us in the serai, and weeping with joy returned to his old trade.'

Neither wealth nor honours nor dignities could satisfy a reformed Thug for long. He would throw them all away, some day, and go back to the lurid pleasures of hunting men, and being hunted himself by the British.

Ramzan was taken into a great grandee's service and given authority over five villages. 'My authority extended over these people to summons them to my presence, to make them stand or sit. I dressed well, rode my pony, and had two sepoys, a scribe and a village guard to attend me. During three years I

used to pay each village a monthly visit, and no one suspected that I was a Thug ! The chief men used to wait on me to transact business, and as I passed along, old and young made their salaam to me.'

And yet, during that very three years he got leave of absence 'to attend a wedding,' and instead went off on a Thugging lark with six other Thugs and hunted the highway for fifteen days !—with satisfactory results.

Afterwards he held a great office under a Rajah. There he had ten miles of country under his command and a military guard of fifteen men, with authority to call out 2,000 more upon occasion. But the British got on his track, and they crowded him so that he had to give himself up. See what a figure he was when he was gotten up for style and had all his things on : 'I was fully armed—a sword, shield, pistols, a matchlock musket and a flint gun, for I was fond of being thus arrayed, and when so armed feared not though forty men stood before me.

He gave himself up and proudly proclaimed himself a Thug. Then by request he agreed to betray his friend and pal, Buhram, a Thug with the most tremendous record in India 'I went to the house where Buhram slept, (often has he led our gangs !) I woke him, he knew me well, and came outside to me. It was a cold night, so under pretence of warming myself, but in reality to have light for his seizure by the guards, I lighted some straw and made a blaze. We were warming our hands. The guards drew around us. I said to them, "This is Buhram," and he was seized just as a cat seizes a mouse. Then

Buhram said, "I am a Thug ! my father was a Thug, my grandfather was a Thug, and I have thugged with many!"

So spoke the mighty hunter, the mightiest of the mighty, the Gordon Cumming of his day. Not much regret noticeable in it.

So many, many times this Official Report leaves one's curiosity unsatisfied. For instance, here is a little paragraph out of the record of a certain band of 193 Thugs, which has that defect :

' Fell in with Lall Sing Subahdar and his family, consisting of nine persons. Travelled with them two days, and the third put them all to death except the two children, little boys of one and half years old.'

There it stops. What did they do with those poor little fellows ? What was their subsequent history ? Did they purpose training them up as Thugs ? How could they take care of such little creatures on a march which stretched over several months ? No one seems to have cared to ask any questions about the babies. But I do wish I knew.

One would be apt to imagine that the Thugs were utterly callous, utterly destitute of human feelings, heartless toward their own families as well as toward other people's ; but this was not so. Like all other Indians, they had a passionate love for their kin. A shrewd British officer who knew the Indian character, took that characteristic into account in laying his plans for the capture of Eugene Sue's famous Feringhea. He found out Feringhea's hiding-place and sent a guard by night to seize him, but the squad



was awkward and he got away. However, they got the rest of the family—the mother, wife, child and brother—and brought them to the officer, at Jubbulpore; the officer did not fret, but bided his time: ‘I knew Feringhea would not go far while links so dear to him were in my hands.’ He was right. Feringhea knew all the danger he was running by staying in the neighbourhood, still he could not tear himself away. The officer found that he divided his time between five villages where he had relatives and friends who could get news for him from his family at Jubbulpore gaol, and that he never slept two consecutive nights in the same village. The officer traced out his several haunts, then pounced upon all the five villages on the one night and at the same hour, and got his man.

Another sample of family affection. A little while previously to the capture of Feringhea’s family, the British officer had captured Feringhea’s foster-brother, leader of a gang of ten, and had tried the eleven and condemned them to be hanged. Feringhea’s captured family arrived at the gaol the day before the execution was to take place. The foster-brother, Jhurhoo, entreated to be allowed to see the aged mother and the others. The prayer was granted and this is what took place—it is the British officer who speaks :

‘In the morning, just before going to the scaffold, the interview took place before me. He fell at the old woman’s feet and begged that she would relieve him from the obligations of the milk with which she had nourished him, and the care with which she had cherished him from infancy, as he was about to die before he could fulfil any of them. She placed her hands on

his head, and he knelt, and she said she forgave him all, and bid him die like a man.'

If a capable artist should make a picture of it, it would be full of dignity and solemnity and pathos ; and it could touch you. You would imagine it to be anything but what it was. There is reverence there, and tenderness, and gratefulness, and compassion, and resignation, and fortitude, and self-respect—and no sense of disgrace, no thought of dishonour. Everything is there that goes to make a noble parting, and give it a moving grace and beauty and dignity. And yet one of these people is a Thug and the other a mother of Thugs ! The incongruities of our human nature seem to reach their limit here.

I wish to make note of one curious thing while I think of it. One of the very commonest remarks to be found in this bewildering array of Thug confessions is this :

'Strangled him and *threw him in a well* !' In one case they threw sixteen in a well—and they had thrown others in the same well before. It makes a body thirsty to read about it.

And there is another very curious thing. The bands of Thugs had *private graveyards*. They did not like to kill and bury at random, here and there and everywhere. They preferred to wait, and toll the victims along, and get to one of their regular burying places (*bheels*) if they could. In the little kingdom of Oude, which was about half as big as Ireland and about as big as the State of Maine, they had *two hundred and seventy-four bheels*. They were scatter-

ed along *fourteen hundred miles of road*, at an average of only *five miles apart*, and the British Government traced out and located each and every one of them and set them down on the map.

The Oude bands seldom went out of their own country, but they did a thriving business within its borders. So did outside bands who came in and helped. Some of the Thug-leaders of Oude were noted for their successful careers. Each of four of them confessed to about 300 murders ; another to nearly 400 ; our friend Ramzan to 604—he is the one who got leave of absence to attend a wedding and went thugging instead ; and he is also the one who betrayed Buhram to the British.

But the biggest records of all were the murder-lists of Futtu Khan and Buhram. Futtu Khan's number is smaller than Ramzan's, but he is placed at the head because his *average* is the best in Oude-Thug history per year of service. His slaughter was 508 men in twenty years, and he was still a young man when the British stopped his industry. Buhram's list was 931 murders, but it took him forty years. His average was one man and nearly all of another man per month for forty years, but Futtu Khan's average was *two* men and a little of another man per month during his twenty years of usefulness.

There is one very striking thing which I wish to call attention to. You have surmised that nobody could travel the Indian roads unprotected, and live to get through ; that the Thugs respected no quality, no vocation, no religion, nobody ; that they killed

every unarmed man that came in their way. That is wholly true—with one reservation. In all the long file of Thug confessions *an English traveller is mentioned but once* and this is what the Thug says of the circumstance :

‘He was on his way from Mhow to Bombay. *We studiously avoided him.* He proceeded next morning with a number of travellers *who had sought his protection*, and they took the road to Baroda.’

We do not know who he was ; he flits across the page of this rusty old book and disappears in the obscurity beyond ; but he is an impressive figure, moving through that valley of death, serene and unafraid, clothed in the might of the English name.

We have now followed the big official book through, and we understand what Thuggee was, what a bloody terror it was, what a desolating scourge it was. In 1830 the English found this cancerous organisation inbedded in the vitals of the Empire, doing its devastating work in secrecy, and assisted, protected, sheltered and hidden by innumerable confederates—big and little chiefs, customs officers, village officials and the police, all ready to lie for it, and the mass of the people through fear, persistently pretending to know nothing about its doings ; and this condition of things had existed for generations, and was formidable with the sanctions of age and old custom. If ever there was an unpromising task, if ever there was a hopeless task in the world, surely it was offered here—the task of conquering Thuggee. But that little handful of English officials in India set their sturdy and confident grip upon it and ripped it out, root and branch !

## CHAPTER VIII

WE left Bombay for Allahabad by a night train. It is the custom of the country to avoid day travel when it can conveniently be done. But there is one trouble: while you can seemingly 'secure' the two lower berths by making early application, there is no ticket as witness of it, and no other producible evidence in case your proprietorship shall chance to be challenged. The word 'engaged' appears on the window, but it doesn't state who the compartment is engaged *for*. If your Satan and your Barney arrive before somebody else's servant, and spread the bedding on the two sofas and then stand guard till you come, all will be well; but if they step aside on an errand, they may find the beds promoted to the two shelves, and somebody else's demons standing guard over their master's beds, which in the meantime have been spread upon your sofas.

The present system encourages good manners—and also discourages them. If a young girl has a lower berth and an elderly lady comes in, it is usual for the girl to offer her place to this late comer; and it is usual for the late comer to thank her courteously and take it. But the thing happens differently sometimes. When we were ready to leave Bombay, my daughter's satchels were holding possession of her berth—a lower one. At the last moment a middle-aged American lady swarmed into the compartment, followed by porters laden with her baggage. She was growling and snarling and scolding, and trying to make herself phenomenally disagreeable; and succeeding. Without a word she hoisted the satchels

into the hanging shelf and took possession of that lower berth.

On one of our trips, Mr. Smythe and I got out at a station to walk up and down, and when we came back Smythe's bed was in the hanging shelf and an English cavalry officer was in bed on the sofa which it had lately been occupying. It was mean to be glad about it, but it is the way we are made ; I could not have been gladder if it had been my enemy that had suffered this misfortune. We all like to see people in trouble, if it doesn't cost us anything. I was so happy over Mr. Smythe's chagrin that I couldn't go to sleep for thinking of it and enjoying it. I knew he supposed the officer had committed the robbery himself, whereas without a doubt the officer's servant had done it without his knowledge. Mr. Smythe kept this incident warm in his heart, and longed for a chance to get even with somebody for it. Some time afterwards the opportunity came in Calcutta. We were leaving on a twenty-four hour journey to visit Darjeeling. Mr. Barclay, the General Superintendent, had made special provision for our accommodation, Mr. Smythe said ; so there was no need to hurry about getting to the train ; consequently we were a little late. When we arrived, the usual immense turmoil and confusion of a great Indian station were in full blast. It was an immoderately long train, for all Indians were going by it somewhither, and the officials were being pestered to frenzy by belated and anxious people. They didn't know where our car was, and couldn't remember having received any orders about it. It was a deep disappointment ; moreover, it looked as if our half of our party would be

left behind altogether. Then Satan came running and said he had found a compartment with one shelf and one sofa unoccupied, and had made our beds and stowed our baggage. We rushed to the place, and just as the train was ready to pull out and the porters were slamming the doors to, all down the line, an officer of the Indian Civil Service, a good friend of ours, put his head in and said—

‘I have been hunting for you everywhere. What are you doing here? Don’t you know——’

The train started before he could finish. Mr. Smythe’s opportunity was come. His bedding, on the shelf, at once changed places with the bedding—a stranger’s—that was occupying the sofa that was opposite to mine. About ten o’clock we stopped somewhere, and a large Englishman of official military bearing stepped in. We pretended to be asleep. The lamps were covered, but there was light enough for us to note his look of surprise. He stood there, grand and fine, peering down at Smythe, and wondering in silence at the situation. After a bit he said—

‘Well!’ And that was all.

But that was enough. It was easy to understand. It meant ‘This is extraordinary. This is high-handed. I haven’t had an experience like this before.’

He sat down on his baggage, and for twenty minutes we watched him through our eyelashes rocking and swaying there to the motion of the train. Then we came to a station, and he got up and went out, muttering, ‘I *must* find a lower berth, or wait over.’

His servant came presently and carried away his things.

Mr. Smythe's sore place was healed, his hunger for revenge was satisfied. But he couldn't sleep, and neither could I, for this was a venerable old car and nothing about it was taut. The closet door slammed all night, and defied every fastening we could invent. We got up very much jaded, at dawn, and stepped out at a way station ; and while we were taking a cup of coffee, that Englishman ranged up alongside, and somebody said to him :

' So you didn't stop off, after all ?'

' No. The guard found a place for me that had been engaged and not occupied. I had a whole saloon car all to myself—oh, quite palatial ! I never had such luck in my life.'

That was our car, you see. We moved into it, straight off the family and all. But I asked the English gentleman to remain, and he did. A pleasant man, an infantry colonel ; and don't know, yet, that Smythe robbed him of his berth, but thinks it was done by Smythe's servant without Smythe's knowledge. He was assisted in gathering this impression.

The Indian trains are manned by Indians exclusively. The Indian stations—except very large and important ones—are manned entirely by them, and so are the posts and telegraphs. The rank and file of the police are Indians. All these people are pleasant and accommodating. One day I left an express train, to lounge about in that perennially ravishing show, the ebb and flow and whirl of gaudy Indians that is always surging up and down the spacious platform of



a great Indian station; and I lost myself in the ecstasy of it, and when I turned, the train was moving swiftly away. I was going to sit down and wait for another train, as I would have done at home; I had no thought of any other course. But an Indian official who had a green flag in his hand, saw me, and said politely—

‘Don’t you belong in the train, sir?’

‘Yes,’ I said.

He waved his flag and the train came back! and he put me aboard with as much ceremony as if I had been the General Superintendent. They are kindly people, the Indians. The face and the bearing that indicate a surly spirit and a bad heart seemed to me to be so rare among Indians—so nearly non-existent, in fact—that I sometimes wondered if Thuggee wasn’t a dream, and not a reality. The bad hearts *are* there, but I believe that they are in a small poor minority. One thing is sure: they are much the most *interesting* people in the world—and the nearest to being incomprehensible. At any rate, the hardest to account for. Their character and their history, their customs and their religion confront you with riddles at every turn—riddles which are a trifle more perplexing after they are explained than they were before. You can get the *facts* of a custom—like caste, and suttee, and thuggee, and so on—and with the facts a theory which tries to explain them, but never quite does it to your satisfaction. You can never quite understand *how* so strange a thing could have been born, nor *why*.

For instance—the *Suttee*. This is the explanation of it; a woman who throws away her life when

her husband dies, is instantly joined to him again, and is forever afterward happy with him in heaven; her family will build a little monument to her, or a temple, and will hold her in honour, and indeed worship her memory always: they will themselves be held in honour by the public, the woman's self-sacrifice has conferred a noble and lasting distinction upon her posterity. And besides, see what she has escaped: if she had elected to live, she would be a disgraced person; she could not re-marry; her family would despise her and disown her; she would be a friendless outcast, and miserable all her days.

Very well, you say, but the explanation is not complete yet. *How* did people come to drift into such a strange custom? What was the origin of the idea? 'Well, nobody knows; it was probably a revelation sent down by the gods.' One more thing: why was such a cruel death chosen—why wouldn't a gentler one have answered? 'Nobody knows; maybe that was a revelation, too.'

No—you can never understand it. It all seems impossible. You resolve to believe that a widow never burnt herself willingly, but went to her death because she was afraid to defy public opinion. But you are not able to keep that position. History drives you from it. Major Sleeman has a convincing case in one of his books. In his government on the Nerbudda he made a brave attempt, on March 28, 1828, to put down suttee on his own hook and without warrant from the Supreme Government of India. He could not foresee that the Government would put it down itself eight months later. The only backing he had was a bold nature

and a compassionate heart. He issued his proclamation abolishing the suttee in his district. On the morning of Tuesday—note the day of the week—the 24th of the following November, Ummed Singh Upadhya, head of the most respectable and most extensive Brahmin family in the district died, and presently came a deputation of his sons and grandsons to beg that his old widow might be allowed to burn herself upon his pyre. Sleeman threatened to enforce his order, and punish severely any man who assisted ; and he placed a police guard to see that no one did so. From the early morning, the old widow of sixty-five had been sitting on the bank of the sacred river by her dead, waiting through the long hours for the permission ; and at last the refusal came instead. In one little sentence Sleeman gives you a pathetic picture of this lonely old gray figure : all day and all night ‘she remained sitting by the edge of the water without eating or drinking.’

The next morning the body of the husband was burned to ashes in a pit eight feet square and three or four feet deep, in the view of several thousand spectators. Then the widow waded out to a bare rock in the river, and everybody went away but her sons, grandsons and other relations. All day she sat there on her rock in the blazing sun without food or drink, and with no clothing but a sheet over her shoulders. The relatives remained with her, and all tried to persuade her to desist from her purpose, for they deeply loved her. She steadily refused. Then a part of the family went to Sleeman’s house, ten miles away, and tried again to get him to let her burn herself. He refused, hoping to save her yet.

All that day she scorched in her sheet on the rock, and all that night she kept her vigil there in the bitter cold. Thursday morning, in the sight of her relatives, she went through a ceremonial which said more to them than any words could have done ; she put on the *dhaja* (a coarse red turban ) and broke her bracelets in pieces. By these acts she became a dead person in the eye of the law, and excluded from her caste, *forever*. By the iron rule of ancient custom, if she should now choose to live she could never return to her family. Sleeman was in deep trouble. If she starved herself to death her family would be disgraced ; and moreover starving would be a more lingering misery than the death by fire. He went back home in the evening, thoroughly worried. The old woman remained on her rock, and there in the morning he found her with her *dhaja* still on her head. ‘She talked very collectedly, telling me that she had determined to mix her ashes with those of her departed husband, and should patiently wait my permission to do so, assured that God would enable her to sustain life till that was given, though she dared not eat or drink. Looking at the sun, then rising before her over a long and beautiful reach of the river, she said calmly, “My soul has been for five days with my husband’s near that sun ; nothing but my earthly frame is left ; and this, I know, you will in time suffer to be mixed with his ashes in yonder pit, because it is not in your nature or usage wantonly to prolong the miseries of a poor old woman.”

He assured her that it was his desire and duty to save her, and to urge her to live, and to keep her family from the disgrace of being thought her mur-

derers. But she said she was not afraid of their being thought so ; that they had all, like good children, done everything in their power to induce her to live, and to abide with them ; ‘and if I should consent, I know they would love and honour me, but my duties to them have now ended. I commit them all to your care, and I go to attend my husband, Ummied Singh Upadhya, with whose ashes on the funeral pile mine have been already three times mixed.’

She beleived that she and he had been upon the earth three several times as wife and husband, and that she had burned herself to death three times upon his pyre. That is why she said that strange thing. Since she had broken her bracelets and put on the red turban, she regarded herself as a corpse ; otherwise she would not have allowed herself to do her husband the irreverence of pronouncing his name. ‘This was the first time in her long life that she had ever uttered her husband’s name, for in India no woman, high or low, ever pronounces the name of her husband.’

Major Sleeman still tried to shake her purpose. He promised to build her a fine house among the temples of her ancestors upon the bank of the river and make handsome provision for her out of rent free lands if she would consent to live ; and if she wouldn’t, he would allow no stone or brick to ever mark the place where she died. But she only smiled, and said, ‘My pulse has long ceased to beat, my spirit has departed ; I shall suffer nothing in the burning ; and if you wish proof, order some fire and you shall see this arm consumed without giving me any pain.’

Sleeman was now satisfied that he could not alter her purpose. He sent for all the chief members of

the family and said he would suffer her to burn herself if they would enter into a written engagement to abandon the suttee in their family thenceforth. They agreed ; the papers were drawn out and signed, and at noon, Saturday, word was sent to the poor old woman. She seemed greatly pleased. The ceremonies of bathing were gone through with, and by three o'clock she was ready and the fire was briskly burning in the pit. She had now gone without food or drink during more than four days and a half. She came ashore from her rock, first wetting her sheet in the waters of the sacred river, for without that safeguard, any shadow which might fall upon her would convey impurity to her ; then she walked to the pit, leaning upon one of her sons and a nephew—the distance was a hundred and fifty yards.

‘I had sentries placed all around and no other person was allowed to approach within five paces. She came on with a calm and cheerful countenance, stopped once, and casting her eyes upward, said, “Why have they kept me five days from thee, my husband ?” On coming to the sentries, her supporters stopped and remained standing ; she moved on, and walked once around the pit, paused a moment, and while muttering a prayer, threw some flowers into the fire. She then walked up deliberately and steadily to the brink, stepped into the centre of the flame, sat down, and leaning back in the midst as if reposing upon a couch, was consumed without uttering a shriek or betraying one sign of agony.’

It is fine and beautiful. It compels one's reverence and respect—no, has it freely, and without the compulsion. We see how the custom, once started,

could continue, for the soul of it is that stupendous power, Faith ; faith brought to the pitch of effectiveness by the eumulative force of example, and long use and custom ; but we cannot understand how the first widows came to take to it. That is a perplexing detail.

Sleeman says that it was usual to play music at the suttee, but that the white man's notion that this was to drown the screams of the martyr is not correct ; that it had a quite different purpose. It was believed that the martyr died prophesying ; that the prophecies sometimes foretold disaster, and it was considered a kindness to those upon whom it was to fall, to drown the voice and keep them in ignorance of the misfortune that was to come.

## CHAPTER IX

It was a long journey—two nights, one day and part of another, from Bombay eastward to Allahabad ; but it was always interesting, and it was not fatiguing.

Out in the country, in India, the day begins early. One sees a plain, perfectly flat, dust-coloured and brick-yardy, stretching limitlessly away on every side in the dim gray light, striped everywhere with hard-beaten narrow paths, the vast flatness broken at wide intervals by bunches of spectral trees that mark where villages are ; and along all the paths are slender women and lanky naked men moving to their work, the women with brass water-jars on their heads, the men carrying hoes. The man is not entirely naked ; always there is a bit of white rag—loin cloth. It amounts to a bandage, and is a white accent on his black person, like the silver band around the middle of a pipe-stem. Sometimes he also wears a fluffy

and voluminous white turban, and this adds a second accent. He then answers properly to Miss Gordon Cummings's flash-light picture of him—as a person who is dressed in 'a turban and a pocket-handkerchief.'

All day long one has this monotony of dust-coloured dead levels and scattering bunches of trees and mud villages ; still there is an enchantment about it that is beguiling, and which does not pall. You cannot tell just what it is that makes the spell, perhaps, but you feel it and confess it, nevertheless. Of course at bottom you know in a vague way that it is *history* ; it is that that affects you, a haunting sense of the myriads of human lives that have blossomed, and withered, and perished here, repeating and repeating and repeating century after century and age after age the barren and meaningless process ; it is this sense that gives to this land power to speak to the spirit and make friends with it ; to speak to it with a voice bitter with satire but eloquent with melancholy. The deserts of Australia and the ice-barrens of Greenland have no speech, for they have no venerable history ; with nothing to tell of man, and his vanities, his fleeting glories and his miseries, they have nothing wherewith to spiritualise their ugliness and veil it with a charm.

There is nothing pretty about an Indian village—a mud one—and I do not remember that we saw any but mud ones on that long flight to Allahabad. It is a little bunch of dirt-coloured mud hovels jammed together within a mud wall. As a rule the rains had beaten down parts of some of the houses, and this gave the village the aspect of a mouldering and hoary



ruin. I believe the cattle and the vermin live inside the wall; for I saw cattle coming out and cattle going in; and whenever I saw a villager, he was scratching. This last is only circumstantial evidence, but I think it has value. The village has a battered little temple or two, big enough to hold an idol, and where there are Mohammedans there are generally a few sorry tombs outside the village that have a decayed and neglected look.

A great Indian river, at low water, suggests the familiar anatomical picture of a skinned human body, the intricate mesh of interwoven muscles and tendons to stand for water-channels, and the archipelagoes of fat and flesh inclosed by them to stand for the sand bars. Somewhere on this journey we passed such a river, and on a later journey we saw in the Sutlej the duplicate of that river. Curious rivers they are; low shores a dizzy distance apart, with nothing between but an enormous acreage of sand-flats with sluggish little veins of water dribbling around amongst them; Saharas of sand, small-pox-pitted with foot-prints punctured in belts as straight as the equator clear from the one shore to the other (barring the channel-interruption)—a dry-shod ferry, you see. Long railway bridges are required for this sort of rivers, and India has them. You approach Allahabad by a very long one. It was now carrying us across the bed of the Jumna, a bed which did not seem to have been slept in for one while or more. It was n't all river bed—most of it was overflow ground.

Allahabad means 'City of God.' I get this from the books. From a printed curiosity—a letter written by one of those brave and confident Hindoo strug-

glers with the English tongue, called a '*babu*'—I got a more compressed translation: '*Godville*.' It is perfectly correct, but that is the most that can be said for it.

We arrived in the forenoon, and shorthanded ; for Satan got left behind, somewhere that morning, and did not overtake us until after nightfall. It seemed very peaceful without him. The world seemed asleep and dreaming.

I did not see the Indian town, I think. I do not remember why ; for an incident connects it with the Great Mutiny, and that is enough to make any place interesting. But I saw the English part of the city. It is a town of wide avenues and noble distances, and is comely and alluring, and full of suggestions of comfort and leisure, and of the serenity which a good conscience buttressed by a sufficient bank account gives. The bungalows stand well back in the seclusion and privacy of large enclosed compounds (private grounds, as we should say) and in the shade and shelter of trees. Even the photographer and the prosperous merchant ply their industries in the elegant reserve of big compounds, and the citizens drive in there upon their business occasions. And not in cabs—no ; in the Indian cities cabs are for the drifting stranger ; all the white citizens have private carriages ; and each carriage has a flock of white-turbaned footmen and drivers all over it. The vicinity of a lecture hall looks like a snowstorm, and makes the lecturer feel like an opera. India has many names, and they are correctly descriptive. It is the Land of Contradictions, the Land of Subtlety and Superstition, the

Land of Wealth and Poverty, the Land of Splendour and Desolation, the Land of Plague and Famine, the Land of the Thug and the Poisoner, and of the Meek and the Patient, the Land of the Suttee, the Land of the Unreinstatable Widow, the Land where All Life is Holy, the Land of Cremation, the Land where the Vulture is a Grave and a Monument, the Land of the Multitudinous Gods ; and if signs go for anything, it is the Land of the Private Carriages.

In Bombay the forewoman of a millinery shop came to the hotel in her private carriage to take the measure for a gown—not for me, but for another. Later, in Calcutta, I found that the Standard Oil clerks had small one-horse vehicles, and did no walking ; and I was told that the clerks of the other large concerns there had the like equipment. But to return to Allahabad.

I was up at dawn, the next morning. In India the tourist's servant does not sleep in a room, in the hotel, but rolls himself up head and ears in his blanket and stretches himself on the verandah, across the front of his master's door, and spends the night there. I don't believe anybody's servant occupies a room. Apparently the bungalow servants sleep on the verandah ; it is roomy, and goes all around the house. I speak of men-servants ; I saw none of the other sex, I think there are none, except child-nurses. I was up at dawn, and walked around the verandah, past the rows of sleepers. In front of one door, a Hindoo servant was squatting, waiting for his master to call him. He had polished the yellow shoes and placed them by the door, and now he had nothing to do but wait. It was freezing cold, but there he was, as motionless as a

sculptured image, and as patient. It troubled me. I wanted to say to him, 'Don't crouch there like that and freeze, nobody requires it of you; stir around and get warm. But hadn't the words. I thought of saying *jeldy jow*, but I could'n't remmeber what it meant, so I didn't say it. I knew another phrase, but it wouldn't come to my mind. I moved on, purposing to dismiss him from my thoughts, but his hare legs and bare feet kept him there. They kept drawing me back from the sunny side to a point whence I could see him. At the end of an hour he had not changed his attitude in the least degree. It was a curious and impressive exhibition of meekness and patience, or fortitude or indifference, I did not know which. But it worried me, and it was spoiling my morning. In fact it spoiled two hours of it quite thoroughly. I quitted his vicinity, then, and left him to punish himself as much as he might want to. But up to that time the man had not changed his attitude a hair. He will always remain with me, I suppose; his figure never grows vague in my memory. Whenever I read of Indian resignation, Indian patience under wrongs, hardships and misfortunes, he comes before me. He becomes a personification, and stands for India in trouble. And for untold ages India in trouble has been pursued with the very remark which I was going to utter but didn't, because its meaning had slipped me : *Jeldy jow* ! ('Come, shove along !') Why, it was the very thing.

In the early brightness we made a long drive out to the Fort. Part of the way was beautiful. It led under stately trees and through groups of Indian houses and by the usual village well, where the picturesque gangs are always flocking to and fro and laugh-

ing and chattering ; and this time brawny men were deluging their bronze bodies with the limpid water and making a refreshing and enticing show of it ; enticing, for the sun was already transacting business, firing India up for the day. There was plenty of this early bathing going on, for it was getting toward breakfast time, and with an unpurified body the Hindoo must not eat.

Then we struck into the hot plain and found the roads crowded with pilgrims of both sexes, for one of the great religious fairs of India was being held, just beyond the Fort, at the junction of the sacred rivers, the Ganges and the Jumna. Three sacred rivers, I should have said, for there is a subterranean one. Nobody has seen it, but that doesn't signify. The fact that it is there is enough. These pilgrims had come from all over India ; some of them had been months on the way, plodding patiently along in the heat and dust, worn, poor, hungry, but supported and sustained by an unwavering faith and belief ; they were serenely happy and content, now ; their full and sufficient reward was at hand ; they were going to be cleansed from every vestige of sin and corruption by these holy waters which make utterly pure whatsoever thing they touch, even the dead and rotten. It is wonderful, the power of a faith like that, that can make multitudes upon multitudes of the old and weak and the young and frail enter without hesitation or complaint upon such incredible journeys and endure the resultant miseries without repining. It is done in love, or it is done in fear ; I do not know which it is. No matter what the impulse is, the act born of it is beyond imagination marvellous to our kind of people,

the cold whites. There are choice great natures among us that could exhibit the equivalent of this prodigious self-sacrifice, but the rest of us know that we should not be equal to anything approaching it. Still, we all talk self-sacrifice, and this makes me hope that we are large enough to honour it in the Hindoo.

Two millions of Indians arrive at this fair every year. How many start and die on the road, from age and fatigue and disease and scanty nourishment, and how many die on the return, from the same causes, no one knows; but the tale is great, one may say enormous. Every twelfth year is held to be a year of peculiar grace; a greatly augmented volume of pilgrims results then.

Great numbers of the Indians along the roads were bringing away holy water from the rivers. They would carry it far and wide in India and sell it. Tavernier, the French traveller (seventeenth century), notes that Ganges water is often given at weddings, 'each guest receiving a cup or two, according to the liberality of the host; sometimes 2,000 or 3,000 rupees' worth of it is consumed at a wedding.'

The Fort is a huge old structure, and has had a large experience in religions. In its great court stands a monolith which was placed there more than two thousand years ago to preach Buddhism by its pious inscription; the Fort was built three centuries ago by a Mohammedan emperor—a resanctification of the place, in the interest of *that* religion; there is a Hindoo temple, too, with subterranean ramifications stocked with shrines and idols; and now that the Fort belongs to the English, it contains a Christian church Insured in all the companies.

From the lofty ramparts one has a fine view of the sacred rivers. They join at that point—the pale blue Jumna, apparently clean and clear, and the muddy Ganges, dull yellow and not clean. On a long, curved spit between the rivers, towns of tents were visible, with a multitude of fluttering pennons, and a mighty swarm of pilgrims. It was a trouble-some place to get down to, and not a quiet place when you arrived; but it was interesting. There was a world of activity and turmoil and noise, partly religious, partly commercial. Crowds were bathing, praying, and drinking the purifying waters, and many sick pilgrims had come long journeys in palanquins to be healed of their maladies by a bath; or if that might not be, then to die on the blessed banks and so make sure of heaven. There were fakeers in plenty, with their bodies dusted over with ashes. There was a holy man who sat naked by the day and by the week on a cluster of iron spikes and did not seem to mind it; and another holy man who stood all day holding his withered arms motionless aloft, and was said to have been doing it for years. All these have a cloth on the ground beside them for the reception of contributions, and even the poorest of the people give a trifle and hope that the sacrifice will be blessed to them. At last came a procession of naked holy people marching by and chanting, and I wrenched myself away.

## CHAPTER X

THE journey to Benares was all in daylight, and occupied but a few hours. It was admirably dusty. The dust settled upon you in a thick ashy layer and turned you into a fakeer, with nothing lacking to the *role* but the sense of holiness. There was a change of cars about mid-afternoon at Moghul-serai—if that was the name—and a wait of two hours there for the Benares train. We could have found a carriage and driven to the sacred city, but we should have lost the wait. In other countries a long wait at a station is a dull thing and tedious, but one has no right to have that feeling in India. You have the monster crowd of bejewelled Indians, the stir, the bustle, the confusion, the shifting splendours of the costumes—dear me, the delight of it, the charm of it are beyond speech. The two hour wait was over too soon. Among other satisfying things to look at was a minor prince from the backwoods somewhere, with his guard of honour, a ragged but wonderfully gaudy gang of fifty dark men armed with rusty flint-lock muskets.

We got away by, and by, and soon reached the outer edge of Benares; then there was another wait; but as usual, with something to look at. This was a cluster of little canvas boxes—palanquins. A canvas box is not much of a sight—when empty; but when there is a lady in it, it is an object of interest. These boxes were grouped apart, in the full blaze of the terrible sun during the three-quarters of an hour that we tarried there. They contained zenana ladies. They had to sit up: there was not room to stretch out. They probably did not mind it. They are used to the close captivity of their dwellings all their lives; when they go a journey they are carried



to the train in these boxes; in the train they have to be secluded from inspection. Many people pity them, and I always did it myself and never charged anything; but it is doubtful if this compassion is valued. While we were in India some good-hearted Europeans in one of the cities proposed to restrict a large park to the use of zenana ladies, so that they could go there and in assured privacy go about unveiled and enjoy sunshine and air as they had never enjoyed them before. The good intentions back of the proposition were recognised, and sincere thanks returned for it, but the proposition itself met with a prompt declination at the hands of those who were authorised to speak for the zenana ladies. Apparently the idea was shocking to the ladies—indeed it was quite manifestly shocking.

Without doubt modesty is nothing less than a holy feeling; and without doubt the person whose rule of modesty has been transgressed feels the same sort of wound that he would feel if something made holy to him by his religion had suffered a desecration. Major Sleeman mentions the case of some high-caste veiled ladies who were profoundly scandalised when some English young ladies passed by with faces bare to the world; so scandalised that they spoke out with strong indignation and wondered that people could be so shameless as to expose their persons like that. And yet 'the legs of the objectors were naked to mid-thigh.' Both parties were clean minded and irreproachably modest, while abiding by their separate rules, but they couldn't have traded rules for a change without suffering considerable discomfort. All human rules are more or less idiotic, I suppose. It is best so, no

doubt. The way it is now, the asylums can hold the sane people, but if we tried to shut up the insane we should run out of building materials.

You have a long drive through the outskirts of Benares before you get to the hotel. And all the aspects are melancholy. It is a vision of dusty sterility, decaying temples, crumbling tombs, broken mud walls, shabby huts ; the hole region seems to ache with age and penury. It must take ten thousand years of want to produce such an aspect. We were still outside of the great Indian city when we reached the hotel. It was a quiet and homelike house, inviting, and manifestly comfortable. But we liked its annex better, and went thither. It was a mile away, perhaps, and stood in the midst of a large compound, and was built bungalow-fashion, everything on the ground floor, and a verandah all around. They have doors in India, but I don't know why. They don't fasten, and they stand open, as a rule, with a curtain hanging in the doorspace to keep out the glare of the sun.

There was one tree in the compound, and a monkey lived in it. At first I was strongly interested in the tree, for I was told that it was the renowned *peepul*—the tree in whose shadow you cannot tell a lie. This one failed to stand the test, and I went away from it disappointed. There was a softly-creaking well close by, and a couple of oxen drew water from it by the hour, superintended by two servants dressed in the usual 'turban and pocket-handkerchief'. The tree and the well were the only scenery, and so the compound was a soothing and lonesome and satisfying place ; and very restful, after so many activities. There was nobody in our bungalow but ourselves ; the

other guests were in the next one, where the *table d'hôte* was furnished. A body could not be more pleasantly situated. Each room had the customary bath attached—a room ten or twelve feet square, with a roomy stone-paved pit in it and abundance of water; one could not easily improve upon this argument, except by furnishing it with cold water and excluding the hot in deference to the fervency of the climate; but that is forbidden; it would damage the bather's health. The stranger is warned against taking cold baths in India, but even the most intelligent strangers are fools, and they do not obey; and so they presently get laid up. I was the most intelligent fool that passed through, that year. But I am still more intelligent now. Now that it is too late.

I wonder if the *dorian*—if that is the name of it, is another superstition, like the peepul tree. There was a great abundance and variety of tropical fruits, but the dorian was never in evidence. It was never the season for the dorian. It was always going to arrive from Burma some time or other, but it never did. By all accounts it was a most strange fruit, and incomparably delicious—to the taste, but not to the smell. Its rind was said to exude a stench of so atrocious a nature that when a dorian was in the room, even the presence of a pole-cat was a refreshment. We found many who had eaten the dorian, and they all spoke of it with a sort of rapture. They said that if you could hold your nose until the fruit was in your mouth a sacred joy would suffuse you from head to foot that would make you oblivious to the smell of the rind, but that if your grip slipped and you caught the smell of the rind before the fruit

was in your mouth, you would faint. There is a fortune in that rind. Some day somebody will import it into Europe and sell it for cheese.

Benares was not a disappointment. It justified its reputation as a curiosity. It is on high ground and overhangs a grand curve of the Ganges. It is a vast mass of building, compactly crusting a hill, and is cloven in all directions by an intricate confusion of cracks which stand for streets. Tall, slim minarets and beflagged temple-spires rise out of it and give it picturesqueness, viewed from the river. The city is as busy as an ant-hill, and the hurly-burly of human life swarming along the web of narrow streets reminds one of the ants. The sacred cow swarms along, too, and goes whither she pleases, and takes toll of the grain-shops, and is very much in the way, and is a good deal of a nuisance, since she must not be molested.

Benares is older than history, older than tradition, older even than legend, and looks twice as old as all of them put together. From a Hindoo statement quoted in Rev. Mr. Parker's compact and lucid 'Guide to Benares,' I find that the site of the town was the beginning-place of the Creation. It was merely an upright 'lingam,' at first, no larger than a stove-pipe, and stood in the midst of a shoreless ocean. This was the work of the god Vishnu. Later he spread the lingam out till its surface was ten miles across. Still it was not large enough for the business; therefore he presently built the globe around it. Benares is thus the centre of the earth. This is considered an advantage.

It has had a tumultuous history, both materially and spiritually. It started Brahminically, many

ages ago; then by and by Buddha came in recent times 2,500 years ago, and after that it was Buddhist during many centuries—twelve, perhaps—but the Brahmins got the upper hand again, then, and have held it ever since. It is unspeakably sacred, in Hindoo eyes, and is as unsanitary as it is sacred, and smells like the rind of the dorian. It is the headquarters of the Brahmin faith, and one-eighth of the population are priests of that church. All India flocks thither on pilgrimage, and pours its savings into the pockets of the priests in a generous stream which never fails. A good stand on the shore of the Ganges is worth a world of money. The holy proprietor of it sits under his grand spectacular umbrella and blesses people all his life, and collects his commission, and the stand passes from father to son, down and down and down through the ages, and remains a permanent and lucrative estate in the family. In Bombay I was told by an American missionary that in India there are 640 Protestant missionaries at work. At first it seemed an immense force, but of course that was a thoughtless idea. One missionary to 500,000 persons—no, that is not a force; it is the reverse of it; 640 marching against an intrenched camp of 300,000,000—the odds are too great. A force of 640 in Benares alone would have its hands over-full, with 8,000 Brahmin priests for adversary. Missionaries need to be well equipped with hope and confidence, and this equipment they seem to have always had, in all parts of the world. Mr. Parker has it. It enables him to get a favourable outlook out of statistics which might add up differently with other mathematicians. For instance :

‘ During the past few years competent observers declare that the number of pilgrims to Benares has increased.’

And then he adds up this fact and gets this conclusion :

‘ But the revival, if so it may be called, has in it the marks of death. It is a spasmodic struggle before dissolution.’

In this world we have seen the Roman Catholic power dying, upon these same terms, for many centuries. Many a time, we have gotten all ready for the funeral and found it postponed again, on account of the weather or something. Taught by experience, we ought not to put on our things for this Brahminical one till we see the procession move. Apparently one of the most uncertain things in the world is the funeral of a religion.

In Benares there are many Mohammedan mosques. There are Hindoo temples without number—these quaintly shaped and elaborately sculptured little stone jugs crowd all the lanes. The Ganges itself and every individual drop of water in it are temples. Religion, then, is the *business* of Benares, just as gold-production is the business of Johannesburg. Other industries count for nothing as compared with the vast and all-absorbing rush and drive and boom of the town’s specialty. Benares is the sacreddest of sacred cities. The moment you step across the sharply defined line which separates it from the rest of the globe, you stand upon ineffably and unspeakably holy ground. Mr. Parker says : ‘It is impossible to convey any adequate idea of the intense feelings of veneration and

affection with which the pious Hindoo regards "Holy Kashi" (Benares). And then he gives you this vivid and moving picture: 'Let a Hindoo regiment be marched through the district, and as soon as they cross the line and enter the limits of the holy place, they rend the air with cries of "Kashi ji ki jai—jai—jai ! (Holy Kashi ! Hail to thee ! Hail ! Hail ! Hail !)"' The weary pilgrim, scarcely able to stand, with age and weakness, blinded by the dust and heat and almost dead with fatigue, crawls out of the oven-like railway carriage and as soon as his feet touch the ground he lifts up his withered hands and utters the same pious exclamation. Let a European in some distant city in casual talk in the bazar mention the fact that he has lived at Benares, and at once voices will be raised to call down blessings on his head, for a dweller in Benares is of all men most blessed.'

It makes our own religious enthusiasms seem pale and cold. Inasmuch as the life of religion is in the heart, not the head, Mr. Parker's touching picture seems to promise a sort of indefinite postponement of that funeral.

Benares is a religious Vesuvius. In its bowels the theological forces have been heaving and tossing, rumbling, thundering, and quaking, boiling and weltering, and flaming and smoking for ages. But a little group of missionaries have taken post at its base, and they have hopes. There are the Baptist Missionary Society ; the Church Missionary Society ; the London Missionary Society ; the Wesleyan Missionary Society ; and the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission. They have schools, and the principal work seems to be among the children. And no doubt that part of

the work prospers best, for grown people, everywhere are always likely to cling to the religion they were brought up in.

## CHAPTER XI

The Ganges front is the supreme show place of Benares. Its tall bluffs are solidly caked from water to summit, along a stretch of three miles, with a splendid jumble of massive and picturesque masonry, a bewildering and beautiful confusion of stone platforms, temples, stair-flights, rich and stately palaces—nowhere a break, nowhere a glimpse of the bluff itself; all the long face of it is compactly walled from sight by this crammed perspective of platforms, soaring stairways, sculptured temples, majestic palaces, softening away into the distances; and there is movement, motion, everywhere, human life everywhere, and brilliantly costumed—streaming in rainbows up and down the lofty stairways, and massed in metaphorical flower gardens on the miles of great platforms at the river's edge.

All this masonry, all this architecture represents piety. The palaces were built by princes whose homes, as a rule, are far from Benares, but who go there from time to time to refresh their souls with the sight and touch of the Ganges, the river of their idolatry. The stairways are records of acts of piety; the crowd of costly little temples are tokens of money spent by rich men for present credit and hope of future reward. Apparently the rich Christian who spends large sums upon his religion is conspicuous with us, by his rarity, but the rich Hindoo who doesn't spend large sums upon his religion is seemingly non-



existent. With us the poor spend money on their religion, but they keep back some to live on. Apparently in India the poor bankrupt themselves daily for their religion. The rich Hindoo can afford his pious outlays ; he gets much glory for his spendings, yet keeps back a sufficiency of his income for temporal purposes ; but the poor Hindoo is entitled to compassion, for his spendings keep him poor yet get him no glory.

We made the usual trip up and down the river, seated in chairs under an awning on the deck of the usual commodious hand-propelled ark ; made it two or three times, and could have made it with increasing interest and enjoyment many times more, of course ; for the palaces and temples would grow more and more beautiful every time one saw them, for that happens with all such things ; also, I think one would not get tired of the bathers, nor their costumes, nor of their ingenuities in getting out of them and into them again without exposing too much bronze, nor of their devotional gesticulations and absorbed bead-tellings.

At one place where we halted for a while, the foul gush from a sewer was making the water turbid and murky all around. Ten steps below that place stood a crowd of men, women and comely young maidens waist deep in the water—and they were scooping it up in their hands and drinking it. Faith can certainly do wonders, and this was an instance of it. Those people were not drinking that fearful stuff to assuage thirst, but in order to purify their souls and the interior of their bodies. According to their creed, the Ganges water makes everything pure that

it touches—instantly and utterly pure. The sewer water was not an offence to them; the sacred water had touched it, and it was now snow-pure and could defile no one.

A word further concerning the Ganges water. When we went to Agra, by and by, we happened there just in time to be in at the birth of a marvel—a memorable scientific discovery—the discovery that in certain ways the Ganges water is the most puissant purifier in the world ! This curious fact, as I have said, had just been added to the treasury of modern science. It had long been noted as a strange thing that while Benares is often afflicted with the cholera she does not spread it beyond her borders. This could not be accounted for. Mr. Hankin, the scientist in the employ of the Government of Agra concluded to examine the water. He went to Benares and made his tests. He got water at the mouths of the sewers where they empty into the river at the bathing ghats; a cubic centimetre of it contained millions of cholera germs; at the end of six hours they were *all dead*. He caught a floating corpse, towed it to the shore, and from beside it he dipped up water that was swarming with cholera germs; at the end of six hours they were *all dead*. He added swarm after swarm of cholera germs to this water; within the six hours *they always died*, to the last sample. Repeatedly he took pure well water which was barren of animal life, and put into it a few cholera germs; they always began to propagate at once, and always within six hours they swarmed—and were numberable by millions upon millions.

For ages and ages the Hindoos have had absolute faith that the water of the Ganges was utterly pure, could not be defiled by any contact whatsoever, and infallibly made pure and clean whatsoever thing touched it. They still believe it, and that is why they bathe in it and drink it, caring nothing for its *seeming* filthiness and the floating corpses. The Hindoos have been laughed at, these many generations, but the laughter will need to modify itself a little from now on. How did they find out the water's secret in those ancient ages? Had they germ scientists then? We do not know. We only know that they had a civilisation long before we emerged from savagery. But to return to where I was about to speak of the burning ghat.

They do not burn fakeers—those revered mendicants. They are so holy that they can get to their place without that sacrament, provided they be consigned to the consecrating river. We saw one carried out to mid-stream and thrown overboard. He was sandwiched between great slabs of stone.

We lay off the cremation-ghat half an hour and saw nine corpses burned. I should not wish to see any more of it, unless I might select the parties. The mourners follow the bier through the town and down to the ghat; then the bierbearers deliver the body to some low-caste men—Doms—and the mourners turn about and go back home. I heard no crying, and saw no tears, there was no ceremony of parting. Apparently these expressions of grief and affection are reserved for the privacy of the home. The dead women come draped in red, the men in white. They are laid in

the water at the river's edge while the pyre is being prepared.

The first subject was a man. When the Doms unswathed him to wash him, he proved to be a sturdily-built, well nourished and handsome old gentleman, with not a sign about him to suggest that he had ever been ill. Dry wood was brought and built up into a loose pile ; the corpse was laid upon it and covered over with fuel. Then a naked holy man who was sitting on high ground a little distance away began to talk and shout with great energy, and he kept up this noise right along. It may have been the funeral sermon, and probably was. I forgot to say that one of the mourners remained behind when the others went away. This was the dead man's son, a boy of ten or twelve, brown and handsome, grave and self-possessed, and clothed in flowing white. He was there to burn his father. He was given a torch, and while he slowly walked seven times around the pyre, the naked priest on the high ground poured out his sermon more clamorously than ever. The seventh circuit completed, the boy applied the torch at his father's head, then at his feet, the flames sprang briskly up with a sharp crackling noise, and the lad went away. Hindoos do not want daughters, because their weddings make such a ruinous expense ; but they want sons, so that at death they may have honourable exit from the world ; and there is no honour equal to the honour of having one's pyre lighted by one's son. The father who dies sonless is in a grievous situation indeed, and is pitied. Life being uncertain, the Hindoo marries while he is still a boy, in the hope that he will have a son ready when the day of his

need shall come. But if he have no son, he will adopt one. This answers every purpose.

Meantime the corpse is burning—and several others. It was a dismal business. The stokers did not sit down in idleness, but moved briskly about, punching up the fires with long poles and now and then adding fuel. Sometimes they hoisted the half of a skeleton into the air, then slammed it down and beat it with the pole, breaking it up so that it would burn better. They hoisted skulls up in the same way and banged and battered them. The sight was hard to bear ; it would have been harder if the mourners had stayed to witness it. I had but a moderate desire to see a cremation ; so it was soon satisfied. For sanitary reasons it would be well if cremation were universal ; but this form of it is revolting, and is not to be recommended.

We went to the temple of the goddess, Bhowanee, or Kali, or Durga. She has these names, and others. She is the only god to whom living sacrifices are made. Goats are sacrificed to her. Monkeys would be cheaper. There are plenty of them about the place. Being sacred, they make themselves very free, and scramble around wherever they please. The temple and its porch are beautifully carved, but this is not the case with the idol. Bhowance is not pleasant to look at. She has a silver face and a projecting swollen tongue which is painted a deep red. She wears a necklace of skulls.

In fact, none of the idols in Benares are handsome or attractive. And what a swarm of them there is ! The town is a vast museum of idols—and all of them crude and misshapen. They flock through one's

dreams at night, a wild mob of nightmares. When you get tired of them in the temple and take a trip on the river, you find idol giants, flashily painted, stretched out side by side on the shore. And apparently, wherever there is room for one more lingam, a lingam is there. If Vishnu had foreseen what his town was going to be, he would have called it Idolville or Lingamburg.

The most conspicuous feature of Benares is the pair of slender white minarets which tower like masts from the great Mosque of Aurangzeb. They seem to be always in sight, from everywhere, those airy, graceful, inspiring things. But masts is not the right word, for masts have a preceptible taper, while these minarets have not. They are 142 feet high, and only  $8\frac{1}{2}$  feet in diameter at the base and  $7\frac{1}{2}$  at the summit—scarcely any taper at all. There is a great view from up there—a wonderful view. A large gray monkey was part of it, and damaged it. A monkey has no judgment. This one was skipping about the upper great heights of the mosque—skipping across empty, yawning intervals which were almost too wide for him, and which he only just barely cleared, each time, by the skin of his teeth. He got me so nervous that I couldn't look at the view. I couldn't look at anything but him. Every time he went sailing over one of those abysses my breath stood still, and when he grabbed for the perch he was going for, I grabbed too, in sympathy. And he was perfectly indifferent, perfectly unconcerned, and I did all the panting myself. He came within an ace of losing his life a dozen times, and I was so troubled about him that I would have shot him if I had had anything to do it with. But I strongly re-

commend the view. There is more monkey than view, and there is always going to be more monkey than view while he survives, but what view you get is superb.

The next thing I saw was more reposeful. It was a new kind of art. It was a picture painted on water. An Indian sprinkled fine dust, of various colours, on the still surface of a basin of water, and out of these sprinklings a dainty and pretty picture gradually grew—a picture which a breath could destroy. Somehow it was impressive, after so much browsing among massive and battered and decaying fanes that rest upon ruins, and those ruins upon still other ruins, and those upon still others again. It was a sermon, an allegory, a symbol, of Instability. Those creations in stone were only a kind of water-pictures, after all.

## CHAPTER XII

A COMFORTABLE railway journey of seventeen and a half hours brought us to the capital of India, which is likewise the capital of Bengal—Calcutta. Like Bombay, it has a population of nearly a million Indians and a small gathering of white people. It is a huge city, and fine, and is called the City of Palaces. It is rich in historical memories; rich in British achievement—military, political, commercial; rich in the results of the miracles done by that brace of mighty magicians, Clive and Hastings. And has a cloud-kissing monument to one Ochterlony.

It is a fluted candlestick 250 feet high. This lingam is the only large monument in Calcutta, I believe. It is a fine ornament, and will keep Ochterlony in mind. Wherever you are, in Calcutta, and

for miles around, you can see it; and always when you see it you think of Ochterlony. And so there is not an hour in the day that you do not think of Ochterlony and wonder who he was. It is good that Clive cannot come back, for he would think it was for Plassey; and then that great spirit would be wounded when the revelation came that it was not. Clive would find out that it was for Ochterlony; and he would think Ochterlony was a battle. And he would think it was a great one, too; and he would say, 'With three thousand I whipped sixty thousand and founded the Empire—and there is no monument; this other soldier ~~must~~ have whipped a billion with a dozen and saved the world.'

But he would be mistaken. Ochterlony was a man, not a battle. And he did good and honourable service, too; as good and honourable service as has been done in India by seventy-five or a hundred other Englishmen of courage, rectitude, and distinguished capacity. For India has been a fertile breeding ground of such men, and remains so; great men, both in war and in the civil service; and as modest as great. But they have no monuments, and were not expecting any. Ochterlony could not have been expecting one, and it is not at all likely that he desired one—certainly not until Clive and Hastings should be supplied. Every day Clive and Hastings lean on the battlements of heaven and look down and wonder which of the two the monument is for; they fret and worry because they cannot find out, and so the peace of heaven is spoiled for them and lost. But not so, Ochterlony. Ochterlony is not troubled. He doesn't suspect that it is his monument. Heaven is sweet and



peaceful to him. There is a sort of unfairness about it all.

There was plenty to see, in Calcutta, but there was not plenty of time for it. I saw the fort that Clive built ; and the place where Warren Hastings and the author of the ' Junius Letters ' fought their duel ; and the great botanical gardens ; and the fashionable afternoon turnout in the Maidan ; and a grand review of the garrison in a great plain at sunrise ; and a military tournament in which great bodies of soldiery exhibited the perfection of their drill at all arms, a spectacular and beautiful show which occupied several nights and closed with the mimic storming of a fort which was as good as the reality for thrilling and accurate detail, and better than the reality for security and comfort ; and we had a pleasure excursion on the Hoogly by courtesy of friends, and devoted the rest of the time to social life and the Indian Museum. But one should spend a month in the museum. It is an enchanted palace of Indian antiquities. Indeed I think a person might spend half a year among those beautiful and wonderful things without exhausting their interest.

It was winter. We were of Kipling's ' hosts of tourists who travel up and down India in the cold weather showing how things ought to be managed.' It is a common expression there, ' the cold weather,' and the people think there is such a thing. It is because they have lived there half a lifetime, and their perceptions have become blunted. When a person is accustomed to 138 in the shade, his ideas about cold weather are not valuable. I had read, in the histories, that the June marches made between

Lucknow and Cawnpore by the British forces in the time of the Mutiny were made in that kind of weather—138 in the shade—and had taken it for historical embroidery. I had read it again in Sergeant-major Forbes Mitchell's account of his military experiences in the Mutiny—at least I thought I had—and in Calcutta I asked him if it was true, and he said it was. An officer of high rank who had been in the thick of the Mutiny said the same. As long as those men were talking about what they know, they were trustworthy, and I believed them ; but when they said it was now 'cold weather,' I saw that they had travelled outside of their sphere of knowledge and were floundering. I believe that in India 'cold weather' is merely a conventional phrase and has come into use through the necessity of having some way to distinguish between weather which will melt a brass door-knob and weather which will only make it mushy. It was observable that brass ones were in use while I was in Calcutta, showing that it was not yet time to change to porcelain. I was told that the change to porcelain was not usually made until May.

But this cold weather was too warm for strangers ; so we started to Darjeeling, in the Himalayas—a twenty-four-hour journey.

### CHAPTER XIII.

*February* 14.—We left at 4.30 P. M. until dark we moved through rich vegetation, then changed to a boat and crossed the Ganges.

*February* 15.—Up with the sun. A brilliant morning, and frosty. The plain is perfectly level, and seems to stretch away and away and away, dimming

and softening, to the uttermost bounds of nowhere. What a soaring, strenuous, gushing fountain-spray of delicate greenery a bunch of bamboo is ! As far as the eye can reach, these grand vegetable geysers grace the view, their spoutings refined to steam by distance. And there are fields of bananas, with the sunshine glancing from the varnished surface of their drooping vast leaves ; and there are frequent groves of palm ; and an effective accent is given to the landscape by isolated individuals of this picturesque family—towering, clean-stemmed, their plumes broken and hanging ragged, Nature's imitation of an umbrella that has been out to see what a cyclone is like, and is trying not to look disappointed. And everywhere through the soft morning mists we glimpse the villages, the countless villages, the myriad villages, thatched, built of clean new matting, snuggling among grouped palms and sheaves of bamboo—villages, villages, no end of villages—not three hundred yards apart, and dozens and dozens of them in sight all the time—a mighty city, hundreds of miles long, hundreds of miles broad, made all of villages, the biggest city in the earth, and as populous as a European kingdom ; I have seen no such city as this before. And there is a continuously repeated and replenished multitude of naked men in view on both sides and ahead—we fly through it mile after mile, but still it is always there, on both sides and ahead—brownbodied naked men and boys, plowing in the fields. But *not a woman*. In these two hours I have not seen a woman or a girl working in the fields.

Sometime during the forenoon, approaching the mountains, we changed from the regular train to one

composed of little canvas-sheltered cars that skimmed along within a foot of the ground and seemed to be going fifty miles an hour when they were really making about twenty. Each car had seating capacity for half a dozen persons ; and when the curtains were up one was substantially out of doors, and could see everywhere, and get all the breeze, and be luxuriously comfortable. It was not a pleasure excursion in name only, but in fact.

After a while we stopped at a little wooden coop of a station just within the curtain of the sombre jungle, a place with a deep and dense forest of great trees and scrub and vines all about it. The royal Bengal tiger is in great force there, and is very bold and unconventional. From this lonely little station a message once went to the railway manager in Calcutta ; ' Tiger eating stationmaster on front porch ; telegraph instructions.'

It was there that I had my first tiger hunt. I killed thirteen. We were presently away again, and the train began to climb the mountains. In one place seven wild elephants crossed the track, but two of them got away before I could overtake them. The railway journey up the mountain is forty miles, and it takes eight hours to make it. It is so wild and interesting and exciting and enchanting that it ought to take a week. As for the vegetation, it is a museum. The jungle seemed to contain samples of every rare and curious tree and bush that we had ever seen or heard of. It is from that museum, I think, that the globe must have been supplied with the trees and vines and shrubs that it holds precious.

The road is infinitely and charmingly crooked. It goes winding in and out under lofty cliffs that are smothered in vines and foliage, and around the edges of bottomless chasms ; and all the way one glides by files of picturesque men, some carrying burdens up, others going down from their work in the tea gardens ; and once there was a gaudy wedding procession, all bright tinsel and colour, and a bride, comely and girlish, who peeped out from the curtains of her palanquin, exposing her face with that pure delight which the young and happy take in sin for sin's own sake.

By and by we were well up in the region of the clouds, and from that breezy height we looked down and afar over a wonderful picture—the Plains of India, stretching to the horizon, soft and fair, level as a floor, shimmering with heat, mottled with cloud-shadows, and cloven with shining rivers. Immediately below us, and receding down, down, down, toward the valley, was a shaven confusion of hill-tops, with ribbony roads and paths squirming and snaking cream-yellow all over them and about them, every curve and twist sharply distinct.

At an elevation of 6,000 feet we entered a thick cloud, and it shut out the world and kept it shut out. We climbed 1,000 feet higher, then began to descend, and presently got down to Darjeeling, which is 6,000 feet above the level of the Plains.

We had passed many a mountain village on the way up, and seen some new kinds of Indians, among them samples of the fighting Ghurkas. They are not large men, but they are strong and resolute.

There are no better soldiers among Great Britain's Indian troops. And we had passed shoals of their women climbing the forty miles of steep road from the valley to their mountain homes, with tall baskets on their backs hitched to their foreheads by a band, and containing a freightage weighing—I will not say how many hundreds of pounds, for the sum is unbelievable. These were young women, and they strode smartly along under these astonishing burdens with the air of people out for a holiday. I was told that a woman will carry a piano on her back all the way up the mountain; and that more than once a woman had done it.

At the railway station at Darjeeling you find plenty of cab-substitutes—open coffins, in which you sit, and are then borne on men's shoulders up the steep roads into the town.

Up there we found a fairly comfortable hotel, the property of an indiscriminate and incoherent landlord, who looks after nothing, but leaves everything to his army of Indian servants. No, he does look after the bill—to be just to him—and the tourist cannot do better than follow his example. I was told by a resident that the summit of Kinchinjunga is often hidden in the clouds, and that sometimes a tourist has waited twenty-two days and then been obliged to go away without sight of it. And yet went not disappointed; for when he got his hotel bill he recognised that he was now seeing the highest thing in the Himalayas. But this is probably a lie.

After lecturing I went to the club that night, and that was a comfortable place. It is loftily situated, and looks out over a vast spread of scenery; from it

you can see where the boundaries of three or four countries come together, some thirty miles away; Thibet is one of them, Nepaul another, and I think Hertzegovina was the other. Apparently in every town and city in India the gentlemen of the British civil and military service have clubs; sometimes it is a palatial one, always it is pleasant and homelike. The hotels are not always as good as they might be, and the stranger who has access to the club is grateful for his privilege and knows how to value it.

Next day was Sunday. Friends came in the gray dawn with horses, and my party rode away to a distant point where Kinchinjunga and Mount Everest show up best, but I stayed at home for a private view; for it was very cold, and I was not acquainted with the horses, anyway. I got a pipe and a few blankets and sat two hours at the window, and saw the sun drive away the veiling gray and touch up the snowpeaks one after another with pale pink splashes and delicate wishes of gold, and finally flood the whole mighty convulsion of snow-mountains with a deluge of rich splendours.

Kinchinjunga's peak was but fitfully visible, but in the between-times it was vividly clear against the sky—away up there in the blue dome more than 28,000 feet above sea level—the loftiest land I had ever seen, by 12,000 feet or more. It was forty-five miles away. Mount Everest is a thousand feet higher but it was not a part of that sea of mountains piled up there before me, and so I did not see it; but I did not care, because I think that mountains that are as high as that are disagreeable.

I changed from the back to the front of the house and spent the rest of the morning there, watching the swarthy strange tribe flock by from their far homes in the Himalayas.

All ages and both sexes were represented, and the breeds were quite new to me, though the costumes of the Thibetans made them look a good deal like Chinamen. The prayerwheel was a frequent feature. It brought me near to those people, and made them seem kinfolk of mine. Through our preacher we do much of our praying by proxy. We do not whirl him around a stick, as they do, but that is merely a detail. The swarm swung briskly by, hour after hour, a strange and striking pageant, a fascinating pageant. It was wasted there, and it seemed a pity. It should have been sent streaming through the cities of Europe or America to refresh eyes weary of the pale monotonies of the circus-pageant. These people were bound for the bazaar, with things to sell. We went down there, later, and saw that novel congress of the wild peoples, and plowed here and there through it, and concluded that it would be worth coming from Calcutta to see, even if there were no Kinchinjunga and Everest.

#### CHAPTER XIV

ON Monday and Tuesday at sunrise we again had fair-to-middling views of the stupendous mountains; then, being well cooled off and refreshed, we were ready to chance the weather of the lower world once more.

We travelled uphill by the regular train five miles to the summit, then changed to a little



canvas-canopied hand-car for the thirty-five mile descent. It was the size of a sleigh, it had six seats, and was so low that it seemed to rest on the ground. It had no engine or other propelling power, and needed none to help it to fly down those steep inclines. It only needed a strong brake, to modify its flight, and it had that. There was a story of a disastrous trip made down the mountain once in this little car by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, when the car jumped the track and threw its passengers over a precipice. It was not true, but the story had value for me, for it made me nervous, and nervousness wakes a person up and makes him alive and alert, and heightens the thrill of a new and doubtful experience. The car could really jump the track, of course; a pebble on the track, placed there by either accident or malice, at a sharp curve where one might strike it before the eye could discover it, could derail the car and fling it down into India; and the fact that the lieutenant-governor had escaped was no proof that I would have the same luck. And standing there, looking down upon the Indian Empire from the airy altitude of 7,000 feet, it seemed unpleasantly far, dangerously far, to be flung from a hand-car.

But after all, there was but small danger—for me. What there was, was for Mr. Pugh, inspector of a division of the Indian police, in whose company and protection we had come from Calcutta. He had seen long service as an artillery officer, and was less nervous than I was, and so he was to go ahead of us in a pilot hand-car, with a Ghurka and another Indian; and the plan was that when we should see his car jump over a precipice we must put on our brake and send

for another pilot. It was a good arrangement. Also Mr. Barnard, chief engineer of the mountain-division of the road, was to take personal charge of our car, and he had been down the mountain in it many a time.

Everything looked safe. Indeed there was but one questionable detail left: the regular train was to follow us as soon as we should start, and it might run over us. Privately, I thought it would.

The road fell sharply down in front of us and went cork screwing in and out around the crags and precipices, down, down, for ever down, suggesting nothing so exactly or so uncomfortably as a crooked toboggan slide with no end to it. Mr. Pugh waved his flag and started, like an arrow from a bow, and before I could get out of the car we were gone too. I had previously had but one sensation like the shock of that departure and that was the gaspy shock that took my breath away the first time that I was discharged from the summit of a toboggan slide. But in both instances the sensation was pleasurable—intensely so : it was a sudden and immense exaltation, a mixed ecstasy of deadly fright and unimaginable joy. I believe that this combination makes the perfection of human delight.

The pilot car's flight down the mountain suggested the swoop of a swallow that is skimming the ground, so swiftly and smoothly and gracefully it swept down the long straight reaches and soared in and out of the bends and around the corners. We raced after it, and seemed to flash by the capes and crags with the speed of light; and now and then we almost overtook it—and had hopes; but it was only

playing with us; when we got near, it released its brake, made a spring around a corner, and the next time it spun into view a few seconds later, it looked as small as a wheel-barrow, it was so far away. We played with the train in the same way. We often got out to gather flowers or sit on a precipice and look at the scenery, then presently we would hear a dull and growing roar, and the long coils of the train would come into sight behind and above us; but we did not need to start till the locomotive was close down upon us—then we soon left it far behind. It had to stop at every station, therefore it was not an embarrassment to us. Our brake was a good piece of machinery: it could bring the car to a standstill on a slope as steep as a house-roof.

The scenery was grand and varied and beautiful, and there was no hurry; we could always stop and examine it. There was abundance of time. We did not need to hamper the train; if it wanted the road, we could switch off and let it go by, then overtake it and pass it later. We stopped at one place to see the Gladstone Cliff, a great crag which the ages and the weather have sculptured into a recognisable portrait of the venerable statesman. Mr. Gladstone is a stockholder in the road, and Nature began this portrait ten thousand years ago, with the idea of having the compliment ready in time for the event.

We saw a banyan tree which sent down supporting stems from branches that were sixty feet above the ground. That is, I suppose it was a banyan; its bark resembled that of the great banyan in the botanical gardens at Calcutta, that spiderlegged thing with

its wilderness of vegetable columns. And there were frequent glimpses of a totally leafless tree upon whose innumerable twigs and branches a cloud of crimson butter-flies had lighted—apparently. In fact these brilliant red butterflies were flowers, but the illusion was good. Afterward, in South Africa, I saw another splendid effect made by red flowers. This flower was probably called the torch-plant—should have been so named, anyway. It had a slender stem several feet high, and from its top stood up a single tongue of flame, an intensely red flower of the size and shape of a small corn-cob. The stems stood three or four feet apart all over a great hill-slope that was a mile long, and made one think of what the Place de la Concord would be if its myriad lights were red instead of white and yellow.

A few miles down the mountain we stopped half an hour to see a Thibetan dramatic performance. It was in the open air on the hill-side. The audience was composed of Thibetans, Ghurkas, and other unusual people. The costumes of the actors were in the last degree outlandish, and the performance was in keeping with the clothes. To an accompaniment of barbarous noises the actors stepped out one after another and began to spin around with immense swiftness and vigour and violence, chanting the while, and soon the whole troupe would be spinning and chanting and raising the dust. They were performing an ancient and celebrated historical play, and a Chinaman explained it to me in pidgin-English as it went along. The play was obscure enough, without the explanation ; with the explanation added, it was opaque. As a drama, this ancient historical work of

art was defective, I thought, but as a wild and barbarous spectacle the representation was beyond criticism.

Far down the mountain we got out to look at a piece of remarkable loop-engineering—a spiral where the road curves upon itself with such abruptness that when the regular train came down and entered the loop, we stood over it and saw the locomotive disappear under our bridge, then in a few moments appear again, chasing its own tail; and we saw it gain on it, overtake it, draw ahead past the rear cars, and run a race with that end of the train. It was like a snake swallowing itself.

Halfway down the mountain we stopped about an hour at Mr. Barnard's house for refreshment; and while we were sitting on the verandah looking at the distant panorama of hills through a gap in the forest, we came very near seeing a leopard kill a calf. It is a wild place, and lovely. From the woods all about came the songs of birds—among them the contributions of a couple of birds which I was not then acquainted with: the brain-fever bird, and the copper-smith. The song of the brain-fever demon starts on a low but steadily rising key, and is a spiral twist which augments in intensity and severity with each added spiral, growing sharper and sharper, and more and more painful, more and more agonising, more and more maddening, intolerable, unendurable, as it bores deeper and deeper and deeper into the listener's brain until at last the brain fever comes as a relief and the man dies.

The coppersmith-bird's note, at a certain distance away, has the ring of a sledge on granite; at a certain other distance the hammering has

a more metallic ring, and you might think that the bird was mending a copper kettle ; at another distance it has a more woodeny thump ; but it is a thump that is full of energy, and sounds just like starting a bung. So he is a hard bird to name with a single name: he is stone-breaker, copper-smith and bung-starter, and even then he is not completely named ; for when he is close by, you find that there is a soft, deep melodious quality in his thump, and for that no satisfying name occurs to you. You will not mind his other notes, but when he camps near enough for you to hear that one, you presently find that his measured and monotonous repetition of it is beginning to disturb you ; next it will weary you, soon it will distress you ; and before long each thump will hurt your head ; if this goes on, you will lose your mind with the pain and the misery of it, and go crazy.

The song of the nightingale is the deadliest known to ornithology. That demoniacal shriek can kill at thirty yards. The note of the cue-owl is infinitely soft and sweet—soft and sweet as the whisper of a flute. But penetrating—oh, beyond belief ; it can bore through boiler-iron. It is a lingering note, and comes in triplets, on the one unchanging key *hoo-o-o*, *hoo-o-o*, *hoo-o-o* ; then a silence of fifteen seconds, then the triplet again ; and so on, all night. At first it is divine ; then less so ; then trying ; then distressing ; then excruciating ; then agonising ; and at the end of two hours the listener is a maniac.

And so, presently we took to the hand-car and went flying down the mountain again ; flying and

stopping, flying and stopping, till at last we were in the plains once more and stowed for Calcutta in the regular train. That was the most enjoyable day I have spent in the earth. For rousing, tingling, rapturous pleasure, there is no holiday-trip that approaches the bird-flight down the Himalayas in a hand-car. It has no fault, no blemish, no lack, except that there are only thirty-five miles of it instead of five hundred.

## CHAPTER XV

So far as I am able to judge, nothing has been left undone, either by man or Nature, to make India the most extraordinary country that the sun visits on his round. Nothing seems to have been forgotten, nothing overlooked. Always when you think you have come to the end of her tremendous specialties and have finished hanging tags upon her as the Land of the Thug, the Land of the Plague, the Land of Famine, the Land of Giant Illusions, the Land of Stupendous Mountains, and so forth, another specialty crops up and another tag is required. I have been overlooking the fact that India is by an unapproachable supremacy the Land of Murderous Wild Creatures. Perhaps it will be simplest to throw away the tags and generalise her with one all-comprehensive name, as the Land of Wonders.

For many years the British Indian Government has been trying to destroy the murderous wild creatures, and has spent a great deal of money in the effort. The annual official returns show that the undertaking is a difficult one.

These returns exhibit a curious annual uniformity in results ; the sort of uniformity which you find in the annual output of suicides in the world's capitals, and the proportions of deaths by this, that and the other disease. You can always come close to foretelling how many suicides will occur in Paris, London and New York next year, and also how many deaths will result from cancer, consumption, dog-bite, falling out of the window, getting run over by cabs, etc., if you know the statistics of those matters for the present year. In the same way, with one year's Indian statistics before you, you can guess closely at how many people were killed in that Empire by tigers during the previous year, and the year before that, and the year before that, and at how many were killed in each of those years by bears, how many by wolves, and how many by snakes ; and you can also guess closely at how many people are going to be killed each year for the coming five years by each of those agencies. You can also guess closely at how many of each agency the Government is going to kill each year for the next five years.

I have before me statistics covering a period of six consecutive years. By these I know that in India the tiger kills something over 800 persons every year, and that the Government responds by killing about double as many tigers every year. In four of the six years referred to, the tiger got 800 odd ; in one of the remaining two years he got only 700, but in the other remaining year he made his average good by scoring 917. He is always sure of his average. Any one who bets that tiger will kill 2,400 people in India in any three consecutive years has invested his money on



a certainty ; any one who bets that he will kill 2,600 in any three consecutive years is absolutely sure to lose.

As strikingly uniform as are the statistics of suicide, they are not any more so than are those of the tiger's annual output of slaughtered human beings in India. The Government's work is quite uniform, too—it about doubles the tiger's average. In six years the tiger killed 5,000 persons, minus 50 ; in the same six years 10,000 tigers were killed, minus 400.

The wolf kills nearly as many people as the tiger—700 a year to the tiger's 800 odd—but while he is doing it, more than 5,000 of his tribe fall.

The leopard kills an average of 230 people per year, but loses 3,300 of his own mess while he is doing it.

The bear kills 100 people per year at cost of 1,250 of his own tribe.

The tiger, as the figures show, makes a very handsome fight against man. But it is nothing to the elephant's fight. The king of beasts, the lord of the jungle, loses 4 of his mess per year, but he kills *forty five* persons to make up for it.

But when it comes to killing cattle, the lord of the jungle is not interested. He kills but 100 in six years—horses of hunters, no doubt—but in the same six the tiger kills more than 84,000, the leopard 1,00,000, the bear 4,000, the wolf 70,000, the hyena more than 13,000, other wild beasts 27,000, and the snakes 19,000—a grand total of more than 300,000; an average of 50,000 head per year.

In response, the Government kills in the six years, a total of 3,201,232 wild beasts and snakes. Ten for one.

There are narrow escapes in India. In the very jungle where I killed sixteen tigers and all those elephants, a cobra bit me but it got well ; everyone was surprised. This could not happen twice in ten years, perhaps. Usually death would result, in fifteen minutes.

We struck out westward or north-westward from Calcutta on an itinerary of a zig-zag sort which would in the course of time carry us across India to its north-western corner and the border of Afghanistan. The first part of the trip carried us through a great region which was an endless garden—miles and miles of the beautiful flower from whose juices comes the opium ; and at Muzaffarpore we were in the midst of the indigo culture ; thence by a branch road to the Ganges at a point near Dinapore, and by a train which stopped at every village, for no purpose connected with business, apparently. We put out nothing, we took nothing aboard. The train hands stepped ashore and gossiped with friends a quarter of an hour, then pulled out and repeated this at the succeeding villages. We had thirty-five miles to go, and six hours to do it in ; but it was plain that we were not going to make it. It was then that the English officers said it was now necessary to turn this gravel-train into an express. So they gave the engine-driver a rupee and told him to fly. It was a simple remedy. After that we made ninety miles an hour. We crossed the Ganges just at dawn, made our connection, and went to Benares, where we stayed twenty-four hours and inspected

that strange and fascinating piety-hive again ; then left for Lucknow.

The heat was pitiless, the flat plains were destitute of grass, they were baked dry by the sun, they were the colour of pale dust, and the dust was flying in clouds. But it was much hotter than this when the relieving forces marched to Lucknow in the time of the Mutiny. Those were the days of 138 in the shade.

## CHAPTER XVI

We were driven over Sir Colin Campbell's route by a British officer, and when I arrived at the Residency I was so familiar with the road that I could have led a retreat over it myself ; but the compass in my head has been out of order from my birth, and so as soon as I was within the battered Bailie Guard and turned about to review the march and imagine the relieving forces storming their way along it, everything was upside down and wrong end first in a moment, and I was never able to get straightened out again. And now when I look at the battleplan the confusion remains. In me the east was born west, and battle-plans which have the east on the right-hand side are of no use to me.

The Residency ruins are draped with flowering vines, and are impressive and beautiful. They and the grounds are sacred now. Within the grounds are buried the dead who gave up their lives there in the long siege.

After a fashion I was able to imagine the fiery storm that raged night and day over the place during so many months, and after a fashion I could

imagine the men moving through it, but I could not satisfactorily place the 200 women, and I could do nothing at all with 250 children. I knew by Lady Inglis's diary that the children carried on their small affairs very much as if blood and carnage and the crash and thunder of a siege were natural and proper features of nursery life, and I tried to realise it ; but when her little Johnny came rushing, all excitement, through the din and smoke, shouting 'Oh, mamma, the white hen has laid an egg !' I saw that I could not do it. Johnny's place was under the bed. I could imagine him there, because I could imagine myself there ; and I think I should not have been interested in a hen that was laying an egg, my interest would have been with the parties that were laying the bomb-shells. I sat at dinner with one of those children, in the club's Indian palace, and I knew that all through the siege he was perfecting his teething and learning to talk ; and while to me he was the most impressive object in Lucknow after the Residency ruins, I was not able to imagine what his life had been during that tempestuous infancy of his, nor what sort of a curious surprise it must have been to him to be marched suddenly out into a strange dumb world where there wasn't any noise, and nothing going on. He was only forty-one when I saw him, a strangely youthful link to connect the present with so ancient an episode as the Great Mutiny.

By and by we saw Cawnpore ; and the open lot which was the scene of Moore's memorable defence ; and the spot on the shore of the Ganges where the massacre of the betrayed garrison occurred ; and the small Indian temple whence the bugle-signal notified

the assassins to fall on. This latter was a lonely spot, and silent. The sluggish river drifted by, almost currentless ; it was dead low water, narrow channels with vast sandbars between, all the way across the wide bed ; and the only living thing in sight was that grotesque and solemn bald-headed bird, the Adjutant, standing on his sixfoot stilts, solitary on a distant bar with his head sunk between his shoulders—thinking ; thinking of his prize, I suppose, the dead Hindoo that lay awash at his feet, and whether to eat him alone or invite friends. He and his prey were a proper accent to that mournful place ; they were in keeping with it, they emphasised its loneliness and its solemnity.

In Agra and its neighbourhood, and afterwards at Delhi, we saw forts, mosques and tombs which were built in the great days of the Mohammedan emperors, and which are marvels of cost, magnitude, and richness of materials and ornamentation, creations of surpassing grandeur, wonders which do indeed make the like things in the rest of the world seem tame and inconsequential by comparison. I am not purposing to describe them. By good fortune I had not read too much about them, and therefore was able to get a natural and rational focus upon them : with the result that they thrilled me, and blessed me, and exalted me. But if I had previously overheated my imagination by drinking too much pestilential literary hot Scotch, I should have suffered disappointment and sorrow.

I mean to speak of only one of these many world-renowned buildings—the Taj Mahal, the most celebrated construction in the earth. I had read a great deal too much about it. I saw it in the daytime, I saw it

in the moonlight, I saw it near at hand, I saw it from a distance ; and I knew, all the time, that of its kind it was *the* wonder of the world, with no competitor now and no possible future competitor, and yet—it was not *my* Taj. My Taj had been built by excitable literary people, it had got solidly lodged in my head, and I could not blast it out.

I wish to place before the reader some of the usual descriptions of the Taj, and ask him to take note of the impressions left in his mind. These descriptions do really state the truth—as nearly as the limitations of language will allow. But language is a treacherous thing, a most unsure vehicle, and it can seldom arrange descriptive words in such a way that they will not inflate the facts—by help of the reader's imagination, which is always ready to take a hand, and work for nothing, and do the bulk of it at that.

I will begin with a few sentences from the excellent little local guide-book of Mr. Satya Chandra Mukerji. I take them from here and there in his description :

‘The inlaid work of the Taj and the flowers and petals that are to be found on all sides on the surface of the marble evince a most delicate touch.’

That is true.

‘The inlaid work, the marble, the flowers, the buds, the leaves, the petals and the lotus stems are almost without a rival in the whole of the civilised world.

‘The work of inlaying with stones and gems is found in the highest perfection in the Taj.’

Gems, inlaid flowers, buds, leaves, to be found on all sides. What do you see before ? Is the fairy structure growing ? Is it becoming a jewel casket ?

‘The whole of the Taj produces a wonderful effect that is equally sublime and beautiful.’

Then Sir William Wilson Hunter :

‘The Taj Mahal with its beautiful domes, “a dream of marble,” rises on the river bank.’

‘The materials are white marble and red sandstone.’

‘The complexity of its design and the delicate intricacy of the workmanship baffle description.’

Sir William continues. I will italicise some of his words :

‘The mausoleum stands on a raised marble platform at each of whose corners rises a tall and slender minaret of graceful proportions and exquisite beauty. Beyond the platform stretch the two wings, one of which is itself a mosque of great architectural merit. In the centre of the whole design, the mausoleum occupies a square of 186 feet with the angles deeply truncated so as to form an unequal octagon. The main feature in this central pile is the great dome which swells upward to nearly two-thirds of a sphere and tapers at its extremity into a pointed spire crowned by a crescent. Beneath it an enclosure of marble trellis-work surrounds the tombs of the princess and of the husband, the Emperor. Each corner of the mausoleum is covered by a similar though much smaller dome erected on a pediment pierced with

graceful Saracenic arches. Light is admitted into the interior through a double screen of pierced marble, which tempers the glare of an Indian sky while its whiteness prevents the mellow effect from degenerating into gloom. The internal decorations consist of inlaid work in *precious stones such as agate, jasper, etc., with which every squandril or salient point in the architecture is richly fretted*. Brown and violet marble is also freely employed in wreaths, scrolls, and lintels to relieve the monotony of white wall. *In regard to colour and design, the interior of the Taj may rank first in the world for purely decorative workmanship*; while the perfect symmetry of its exterior, once seen can never be forgotten, nor the ærial grace of its domes, rising like marble bubbles into the clear sky. The Taj represents the most highly-elaborated stage of ornamentation reached by the Indo-Mohammedan builders, the stage in which the architect ends and the *jeweller* begins. In its magnificent gateway the diagonal ornamentation at the corners, which satisfied the designers of the gateways of Itimad-ud-doulah and Sikandra mausoleums is superseded by *fine marble, in bold twists, strong and handsome*. The triangular insertions of white marble and large flowers have in like manner given place to *fine inlaid work*. Firm perpendicular lines in black marble with well proportioned panels of the same material are effectively used in the interior of the gateway. On its top the Hindoo brackets and monolithic architraves of Sikandra are replaced by Moorish carped arches, usually single blocks of red sandstone, in the kiosks and pavilions which adorn the roof. From the pillared pavilions a magnificent view is obtained of the Taj gardens below, with the



noble Jumna river at their farther end, the city and Fort of Agra in the distance. From this beautiful and splendid gateway one passes up a straight alley shaded by ever green trees cooled by a broad shallow piece of water running along the middle of the path to the Taj itself. *The Taj is entirely of marble and gems.* The red sandstone of the other Moham-medan buildings has disappeared, or rather the red sandstone which used to form the thickness of the walls, is in the Taj itself overlaid completely with white marble, and the white marble itself *inlaid with precious stones arranged in lovely patterns of flowers.* A feeling of purity impresses itself on the eye and the mind from the absence of the coarser material which forms so invariable a material in Agra architecture. The lower walls and panels are covered with tulips, oleanders, and full blown lilies, in flat carving on the white marble, and *although the inlaid work of flowers done in gems is very brilliant* when looked at closely, there is on the whole but little colour, and the all-prevailing sentiment is one of whiteness, silence, and calm. The whiteness is broken only by the fine colour of the inlaid gems, by lines in black marbles, and by delicately written inscriptions also in black from the Koran. Under the dome of *the vast mausoleum* a high and beautiful screen of open tracery in white marble rises round the two tombs, or rather cenotaphs of the Emperor and his princess ; and in this *marvel of marble*, the carving has advanced from the old geometrical patterns to a trellis-work of flowers and foliage, handled with great freedom and spirit. The two cenotaphs in the centre of the *exquisite* enclosure have no carving except the plain *Kalamdan* or oblong pen-box on the tomb of Emperor Shah Jehan. But both

cenotaphs are *inlaid with flowers made of costly gems, and with the ever graceful oleander scroll.*'

Bayard Taylor, after describing the details of the Taj, goes on to say 'On both sides the palm, the ban-yan, and the feathery bamboo mingle their foliage ; the song of birds meets your ears, and the odour of roses and lemon flowers sweetens the air. Down such a vista and over such a foreground rises the Taj. There is no mystery, no sense of partial failure about the Taj. *A thing of perfect beauty and of absolute finish*, in every detail it might pass for the work of genii who knew naught of the weaknesses and ills with which mankind are beset.'

All of those details are true. But taken together, they state a falsehood—to you.

I had to visit Niagara fifteen times before I succeeded in getting my imaginary Falls gauged to the actuality and could begin to sanely and wholesomely wonder at them for what they were, not what I had expected them to be. When I first approached them it was with my face lifted towards the sky, for I thought I was going to see an Atlantic ocean pouring down thence over cloud-vexed Himalayan heights, a seagreen wall of water sixty miles front and six miles high : and so, when the toy reality came suddenly into view—that beruffled little wet apron hanging out to dry—the shock was too much for me, and I fell with a dull thud. Yet slowly, surely, steadily, in the course of my fifteen visits, the proportions adjusted themselves to the facts, and I came at last to realise that a waterfall a hundred and sixty-five feet high and a quarter of a mile wide was an impressive thing.

It was not a dipperful to my vanished great vision, but it would answer.

I know that I ought to do with the Taj as I was obliged to do with Niagara— see it fifteen times, and let my mind gradually get rid of the Taj built in it by its describers by help of my imagination, and substitute for it the Taj of fact. It would be noble and fine then, and a marvel ; not the marvel which it replaced, but still a marvel, and fine enough.

## CHAPTER XVII

We wandered contentedly around here and there in India : to Lahore, among other places, where the Lieutenant-Governor lent me an elephant. This hospitality stands out in my experiences in a stately isolation. It was a fine elephant, affable, gentlemanly, educated, and I was not afraid of it. I even rode it with confidence through the crowded lanes of the city, where it scared all the horses out of their senses, and where children were always just escaping its feet. It took the middle of the road in a fine independent way and left it to the world to get out of the way or take the consequences. I am used to being afraid of collisions when I ride or drive, but when one is on the top of an elephant that feeling is absent. I could have ridden in comfort through a regiment of runaway teams. I could easily learn to prefer an elephant to any other vehicle, partly because of that immunity from collisions, and partly because of the fine view one has from up there, and partly because of the dignity one feels in that high place, and partly because one can look in at the windows and see what is going on privately amongst the family. The Lahore

horses were used to elephants, but they were rapturously afraid of them just the same. It seemed curious. Perhaps the better they know the elephant the more they respect him in that peculiar way. In our own case we are not afraid of dynamite till we get acquainted with it.

We drifted as far as Rawal Pindi, away up on the Afghan frontier—I think it was the Afghan frontier, but it may have been Hertzegovina—it was around there somewhere—and down again to Delhi, to see the ancient architectural wonders there and in Old Delhi and not describe them.

We had a refreshing rest, there in Delhi, in a great old mansion which possessed historical interest. It was built by a rich Englishman who had become orientalised—so much so that he had a zenana. But he was a broad-minded man, and remained so. To please his harem he built a mosque ; to please himself he built an English church. That kind of a man will arrive, somewhere. In the Mutiny days the mansion was the British general's headquarters. It stands in a great garden—oriental fashion—and about it are many noble trees. The trees harbour monkeys ; and they are monkeys of a watchful and enterprising sort, and not much troubled with fear. They invade the house whenever they get a chance, and carry off everything they don't want. One morning the master of the house was in his bath, and the windows was open. Near it stood a pot of yellow paint and a brush. Some monkeys appeared in the window : to scare them away, the gentleman threw his sponge at them. They did not scare at all ;

they jumped into the room and threw yellow paint all over him from the brush, and drove him out ; then they painted the walls and the floor and the tank and the windows and the furniture yellow, and were in the dressing-room painting that when help arrived and routed them.

Two of these creatures came into my room in the early morning, through a window whose shutters I had left open, and when I woke, one of them was before the glass brushing his hair, and the other one had my note-book, and was reading a page of humorous notes and crying. I did not mind the one with the hair-brush, but the conduct of the other one hurt me ; it hurts me yet. I threw something at him, and that was wrong, for my host had told me that the monkeys were best left alone. They threw everything at me that they could lift, and then went into the bathroom to get some more things, and I shut the door on them.

At Jeypoor, in Rajputana, we made a considerable stay. We were not in the Indian city, but several miles from it, in the small European-official suburb. There were but few Europeans—only fourteen—but they were all kind and hospitable, and it amounted to being at home.

We were pleasantly situated in a small two-storeyed inn, in an empty large compound which was surrounded by a mud wall as high as a man's head. The inn was kept by nine Hindoo brothers, its owners. They lived, with their families, in a one-storeyed building within the compound but off to one side, and there was always a long pile of their little comely brown children loosely stacked on its verandah, and a

detachment of the parents wedged amongst them smoking the hookah or the howdah or whatever they call it. By the verandah stood a palm, and a monkey lived in it, and led a lonesome life, and always looked sad and weary, and the crows bothered him a good deal.

The inn cow poked about the compound and emphasized the secluded and country air of the place, and there was a dog of no particular breed, who was always present in the compound, and always asleep, always stretched out basking in the sun and adding to the deep tranquility and reposefulness of the place, when the crows were away on business. White-draped servants were coming and going all the time, but they seemed only spirits, for their feet were bare and made no sound. Down the lane apiece lived an elephant in the shade of a noble tree, and rocked and rocked, and reached about with his trunk, begging of his brown mistress, or fumbling the children playing about his feet. And there were camels about, but they go on velvet feet, and were proper to the silence and serenity of the surroundings.

Our Satan was lost to us. In these later days he had passed out of our life—lamented by me, and sincerely. I was missing him; I am missing him yet, after all these months. He was an astonishing creature to fly around and do things. He didn't always do them quite right, but he *did* them, and did them suddenly. There was no time wasted. You would say—

‘Pack the trunks and bags, Satan.’

‘Wair good’ (very good).

Then there would be a brief sound of thrashing and slashing and humming and buzzing, and a spectacle as of a whirlwind spinning gowns and jackets and coats and boots and things through the air ; and then with bow and touch—

‘Awready, master.’

It was wonderful. It made one dizzy. He crumpled dresses a good deal, and he had no particular plan about the work—at first—except to put each article into the trunk it didn’t belong in. But he soon reformed, in this matter. Not entirely ; for, to the last he would cram into the satchel sacred to literature any odds and ends of rubbish that he couldn’t find a handy place for, elsewhere. When threatened with death for this, it did not trouble him ; he only looked pleasant, saluted with soldierly grace, said ‘Wair good,’ and did it again next day.

He was always busy ; kept the rooms tidied up, the boots polished, the clothes brushed, the wash-basin full of clean water, my dress clothes laid out and ready for the lecture-hall an hour ahead of time ; and he dressed me from head to heel in spite of my determination to do it myself, according to my lifelong custom.

He was a born boss, and loved to command, and to jaw and dispute with inferiors, and harry them and bullyrag them. He was fine at the railway station—yes, he was at his finest there. He would shoulder and plunge and paw his violent way through the packed multitude with nineteen coolies at his tail, each bearing a trifle of luggage—one a trunk, another a parasol, another a shawl, another a fan, and so on ;

one article to each, and the longer the procession the better he was suited—and he was sure to make for some engaged sleeper and begin to hurl the owner's things out of it, swearing it was ours and that there had been a mistake. Arrived at our own sleeper he would undo the bedding bundles and make the beds and put everything to rights and shipshape in two minutes ; then put his head out at a window and have a restful good time abusing his gang of coolies and disputing their bill untill we arrived and made him pay them and stop his noise.

Speaking of noise, he certainly was the noisiest little devil in India—and that is saying much, very much indeed. I loved him for his noise, but the family detested him for it. They could not abide it. It humiliated them. As a rule, when we got within six hundred yards of one of those big railway stations, a mighty racket of screaming and shrieking and shouting and storming would break upon us, and I would be happy to myself, and the family would say, with shame—

‘There—that’s Satan. Why do you keep him ?’

And sure enough, there in the whirling midst of fifteen hundred wondering people we would find that little scrap of a creature gesticulating like a spider with the colic, his black eyes snapping, his fez-tassel dancing, his jaws pouring out floods of Billingsgate upon his gang of beseeching and astonished coolies.

I loved him, I couldn't help it ; but the family—why, they could hardly speak of him with patience. To this day I regret his loss, and wish I had him back ; but—it is different with them. He was a native of



Surat. Twenty degrees of latitude lay between his birthplace and Manuel's, and fifteen hundred between their ways and characters and dispositions. I only liked Manuel, but I loved Satan. This latter's real name was intensely Indian. I could not quite get the hang of it, but it sounded like Bunder Rao Ram Chunder Clam Chowder. It was too long for handy use anyway, so I reduced it.

When he had been with us two or three weeks, he began to make mistakes which I had difficulty in patching up for him. Approaching Benares one day, he got out of the train to see if he could get up a misunderstanding with somebody, for it had been a weary long journey and he wanted to freshen up. He found what he was after, but kept up his pow-wow a shade too long, and got left. So there we were in a strange city and no chambermaid. It was awkward for us, and we told him he must not do so any more. He saluted and said in his dear pleasant way, 'Wair good' Then at Lucknow he got drunk. I said it was fever, and got the family compassion and solicitude aroused ; so they gave him a teaspoonful of liquid quinine and it set his vitals on fire. He made several grimaces which gave me a better idea of the Lisbon earthquake than any I have ever got of it from paintings and descriptions. His drunk was still portentously solid next morning, but I could have pulled him through with the family if he would only have taken another spoonful of that remedy ; but no, although he was stupefied, his memory still had flickerings of life ; so he smiled a divinely dull smile and said, fumblingly saluting—

'Scoose me, mem Saheb, scoose me, Missy Saheb; Satan not prefer it, please.'

Then some instinct revealed to them that he was drunk. They gave him prompt notice that next time this happened he must go. He got out a maudlin and most gentle 'Wair good,' and saluted indefinitely.

Only one short week later he fell again. And oh, sorrow—not in a hotel this time, but in an English gentleman's private house. And in Agra, of all places. So he had to go. When I told him, he said patiently, 'Wair good,' and made his parting salute, and went out from us to return no more for ever. Dear me, I would rather have lost a hundred angels than that one poor lovely devil. What style he used to put on, in a swell hotel or in a private house! Snow-white muslin from his chin to his bare feet, a crimson sash embroidered with gold thread around his waist, and on his head a great sea-green turban like to the turban of the Grand Turk.

He was not a liar; but he will become one if he keeps on. He told me once that he used to crack cocoanuts with his teeth when he was a boy; and when I asked how he got them into his mouth he said he was upwards of six feet high at that time, and had an unusual mouth; and when I followed him up and asked him what had become of that other foot, he said a house fell on him and he was never able to get his stature back again. Swervings like these from the strict line of fact often beguile a truthful man on and on until he eventually becomes a liar.

His successor was a Mohammedan—Sahadat Mohammed Khan; very dark, very tall, very grave. He went always in flowing masses of white, from the

top of his big turban down to his bare feet. His voice was low. He glided about in a noiseless way, and looked like a ghost. He was competent and satisfactory. But where he was, it seemed always Sunday. It was not so in Satan's time.

Jeypoor is intensely Indian, but it has two or three features which indicate the presence of science and interest in the weal of the common public: such as the liberal water supply, furnished by great works built at the State's expense; good sanitation, resulting in a degree of healthfulness unusually high for India; a noble pleasure garden, with privileged days for women; schools for the instruction of youth in advanced art, both ornamental and utilitarian; and a new and beautiful palace stocked with a museum of extraordinary interest and value. Without the Maharaja's sympathy and purse these beneficences could not have been created: but he is a man of wide views and large generousities, and all such matters find hospitality with him.

We drove often to the city from the hotel Kaiser-i-Hind, a journey which was always full of interest, both night and day, for that country road was never quiet, never empty, but was always India in motion, always a streaming flood of brown people clothed in smouchings from the rainbow, a tossing and moiling flood, happy, noisy, a charming and satisfying confusion of strange human and strange animal life and equally strange and outlandish vehicles.

And the city itself is a curiosity. Any Indian city is that, but this one is not like any other that we saw. It is shut up in a lofty turreted wall; the main body of it is divided into six parts by perfectly straight

streets that are more than a hundred feet wide ; the blocks of houses exhibit a long frontage of the most taking architectural quaintness, the straight lines being broken everywhere by pretty little balconies, pillared and highly ornamented, and other cunning and cosy and inviting perches and projections, and many of the fronts are curiously pictured by the brush, and the whole of them have the soft rich tint of strawberry ice-cream. One cannot look down the far stretch of the chief street and persuade himself that these are real houses and that it is all out of doors—the impression that it is an unreality, a picture, a scene in a theatre, is the only one that will take hold.

Then there came a great day when this illusion was more pronounced than ever. A rich Hindoo had been spending a fortune upon the manufacture of a crowd of idols and accompanying paraphernalia whose purpose was to illustrate scenes in the life of his especial god or saint, and this fine show was to be brought through the town in processional state at ten in the morning. As we passed through the great public pleasure garden on our way to the city we found it crowded with Indians. That was one sight. Then there was another. In the midst of the spacious lawns stands the palace which contains the museum—a beautiful construction of stone which shows arched colonnades, one above another, and receding, terrace fashion, toward the sky. Every one of these terraces, all the way to the top one, was packed and jammed with men. One must try to imagine those solid masses of splendid colour, one above another, up and up, against the blue sky, and the Indian sun turning them all to balls of fire and flame.

Later, when we reached the city and glanced down the chief avenue, smouldering in its crushed strawberry tint, those splendid effects were repeated ; for every balcony, and every fanciful bird cage of a snuggerly countersunk in the housefronts, and all the long lines of roofs were crowded with people, and each crowd was an explosion of brilliant colour.

Then the wide street itself, away down, and down, and down into the distance, was alive with gorgeously clothed people—not still, but moving ; swaying, drifting, eddying, a delirious display of all colours and all shades of colour, delicate, lovely, pale, soft, strong, stunning, vivid, brilliant, a sort of storm of sweet-pea blossoms passing on the wings of a hurricane ; and presently, through this storm of colour, came swaying and swinging, the majestic elephants, clothed in their Sunday-best of gorgeousnesses, and the long procession of fanciful trucks freighted with their groups of curious and costly images, and then the long rear-guard of stately camels, with their picturesque riders.

For colour, and picturesqueness, and novelty, and outlandishness, and sustained interest and fascination, it was the most satisfying show I had ever seen, and I suppose I shall not have the privilege of looking upon its like again.

## CHAPTER XVIII

I received a curious letter one day, from the Punjab. The handwriting was excellent, and the wording was English—English, and yet not exactly English. The style was easy and smooth and flowing, yet there was something subtly foreign about it—

something tropically ornate and sentimental and rhetorical. It turned out to be the work of a Hindoo youth, the holder of a humble clerical billet in a railway office. He had been educated in one of the numerous colleges of India. Upon inquiry I was told that the country was full of young fellows of his like. They had been educated away up to the snow-summits of learning and the market for all this elaborate cultivation was minutely out of proportion to the vastness of the product. This market consisted of some thousands of small clerical posts under the Government—the supply of material for it was multitudinous. If this youth with the flowing style and the blossomy English was occupying a small railway clerkship, it meant that there were hundreds and hundreds as capable as he, or he would be in a higher place; and it certainly meant that there were thousands whose education and capacity had fallen a little short, and that they would have to go *without* places. Apparently, then, the colleges of India were doing what our High Schools have long been doing—richly over-supplying the market for highly educated service; and thereby doing a damage to the scholar, and through him to the country.

At home I once made a speech deploring the injuries inflicted by the High School in making handicrafts distasteful to boys who would have been willing to make a living at trades and agriculture if they had but had the good luck to stop with the common school. But I made no converts. Not one, in a community overrun with educated idlers who were above following their fathers' mechanical trades, yet could find no market for their book knowledge. The same mail that brought me the letter from the Punjab, brought also a little book

published by Messrs. Thacker Spink & Co. of Calcutta, which interested me, for both its preface and its contents treated of this matter of over-education. In the preface occurs this paragraph from the 'Calcutta Review.' For 'Government office' read 'dry-goods clerkship' and it will fit more than one region of America :

'The education that we give makes the boys a little less clownish in their manners, and more intelligent when spoken to by strangers. On the other hand, it has made them less contented with their lot in life, and less willing to work with their hands. The form which discontent takes in this country is not of a healthy kind ; for the Indians consider that the only occupation worthy of an educated man, is that of a writership in some office, and especially in a Government office. The village school-boy goes back to the plough with the greatest reluctance ; and the town school-boy carries the same discontent and inefficiency into his father's workshop. Sometimes these ex-students positively refuse at first to work and more than once parents have openly expressed their regret that they ever allowed their sons to be inveigled to school.'

The little book which I am quoting from is called 'Indo-Anglian Literature,' and is well stocked with 'baboo' English—clerkly English, booky English, acquired in the schools. Some of it is very funny—almost as funny, perhaps, as what you and I produce when we try to write in a language not our own ; but much of it is surprisingly correct and free. If I were going to quote *good* English—but I am not. India is well stocked with people who speak it and write it

as well as the best of us. I merely wish to show some of the quaint imperfect attempts at the use of our tongue. There are many letters in the book; poverty imploring help—bread, money, kindness, office—generally an office, a clerkship, some way to get food and a rag out of the applicant's unmarketable education; and food not for himself alone, but sometimes for a dozen helpless relations in addition to his own family; for those people are astonishingly unselfish and admirably faithful to their ties of kinship. Among us I think there is nothing approaching it. Strange as some of these wailing and supplicating letters are, humble and even grovelling as some of them are, and quaintly funny and confused as a goodly number of them are, there is still a pathos about them as a rule, that checks the rising laugh and reproaches it. In Ceylon a little beggar-girl embarrassed me by calling me father, although I knew she was mistaken. I was so new that I did not know she was merely following the custom of the dependent and the supplicant:

‘Sir,—I pray please to give me some action (work) for I am very poor boy. I have no one to help me even so father for it so it seemed in thy good sight, you give the Telegraph Office, and another work what is your wish I am very poor boy, this understand what is your wish you my father I am your son this understand what is you wish.

‘Your Sirvent, P. C. B.’

Here is an application for the post of instructor in English to some children ;

‘ My Dear Sir or Gentleman, that your Petitioner has much qualification in the Language of English to



instruct the young boys: I was given to understand that your of suitable children has to acquire the knowledge of English language.'

As a sample of the flowery Eastern style I will take a sentence or two from a long letter written by a young Indian to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal—an application for employment :

' Honored and much respected Sir,—I hope your honor will condescend to hear the tale of this poor creature. I shall overflow with gratitude at this mark of your royal condescension. The bird-like happiness has flown away from my nest-like heart and has not hitherto returned from the period whence the rose of my father's life suffered the autumnal breath of death, in plain English he passed through the gates of Grave and from that hour the phantom of delight has never danced before me.'

It is all school-English, book-English, you see ; and good enough, too, all things considered. If the Indian boy had but that one study he would shine, he would dazzle, no doubt. But that is not the case. He is situated as are our public school children—loaded down with an over-freightage of other studies ; and frequently they are as far beyond the actual point of progress reached by him and suited to the stage of development attained, as could be imagined by the insanest fancy. Apparently—like our public-school boy—he must work, work, work, in school and out, and play but little. Apparently—like our public-school boy—his 'education' consists in learning *things*, not the meanings of them ; he is fed upon the husks, not the corn. From several essays written by school-boys in answer to the question of how they spend

their day, I select one—the one which goes most into detail :

‘ 66. At the break of the day I rises from my own bed and finish my daily duty, then I employ myself till 8 o'clock, after which I employ myself to bathe, then take for my body some sweet meat, and just at 9½ I came to school to attend my class duty, then at 2½ p. m. I return from school and engage myself to do my natural duty, then, I engage for a quarter to take my tiffin then, I study till 5 p.m., after which I began to play anything which comes in my head. After 8½ half pass to eight we are began to sleep, before sleeping I told a constable just 11 o' he came and rose us from half pass eleven we began to read still morning.’

It is not perfectly clear, now that I come to cipher upon it. He gets up at about five in the morning or along there somewhere, and goes to bed about fifteen or sixteen hours afterward—that much of it seems straight; but why he should rise again three hours later and resume his studies till morning is puzzling.

I think it is because he is studying history. History requires a world of time and bitter hard work when your ‘education’ is no further advanced than the cat’s; when you are merely stuffing yourself with a mixed-up mess of empty names and random incidents and elusive dates which no one teaches you how to interpret, and which, uninterpreted, pay you not a farthing’s value for your waste of time. Yes, I think, he had to get up at half past 11 p.m., in order to be sure to be perfect with his history lesson by

noon. With results as follows—from a Calcutta school examination :

*Q.—Who was Cardinal Wolsey?*

2. Cardinal Wolsy was an Editor of a paper named 'North Briton.' No. 45 of his publication he charged the King of uttering a lie from the throne. He was arrested and cast into prison ; and after releasing went to France.

3. As Bishop of Yourk but died in disentry in a church on his way to be blockheaded

8. Cardinal Wolsey was the son of Edward IV, after his father's death he himself ascended the throne at the age of (10) ten only, but when he surpassed or when he was fallen in his twenty years of age at that time he wished to make a journey in his countries under him, but he was opposed by his mother to do journey, and according to his mother's example he remained in the home, and then became King. After many times obstacles and many confusion he became King and afterwards his brother.

There is probably not a word of truth in that.

*Q.—What is the meaning of Ich Dien?*

10. An honor conferred on the first or eldest sons of English Sovereigns. It is nothing more than some feathers.

11. '*Ich Dien*' was the word which was written on the feathers of the blind King who came to fight being interlaced with the bridles of the horse.

13. Ich Dien is a title given to Henry VII. by the Pope of Rome, when he forwarded the Reformation of Cardinal Wolsy to Rome, and for this reason he was called Commander of the faith.

A dozen or so of this kind of insane answers are quoted, in the book, from that examination. Each answer is sweeping proof, all by itself, that the person uttering it was pushed ahead of where he belonged when he was put into history; proof that he had been put to the task of acquiring history before he had a single lesson in the *art* of acquiring it; which is the equivalent of dumping a pupil into geometry before he has learned the progressive steps which lead up to it and make its acquirement possible. Those Calcutta novices had no business with history. There was no excuse for exposing them and their teachers. They were totally empty; there was nothing to 'examine.'

Helen Kellar has been dumb, stone deaf and stone blind, ever since she was a little baby a year and a half old; and now at sixteen years of age this miraculous creature, this wonder of all the ages, passes the Harvard University examination in Latin, German, French, history, *belles lettres*, and such things—and does it brilliantly, too, not in a commonplace fashion. She doesn't know merely *things*, she is splendidly familiar with the *meanings* of them. When she writes an essay on a Shakespearian character, her English is fine and strong, her grasp of the subject is the grasp of one who *knows*, and her page is electric with light. Has Miss Sullivan taught her by the methods of India and the American public school? No—oh, no; for then she would be deaf and dumber and blinder than she was before. It is a pity that we can't educate all the children in the asylums.

To continue the Calcutta exposure :

*Q. What is the meaning of Sheriff?*

25. Sherrif is a post opened in the time of John; the duty of Sherrif here, in Calcutta, to look out and catch those carriages which is rashly driven out by the coachman; but it is a high post in England.

26. Sheriff was the English bill of common prayer.

27. The man with whom the accusative persons are placed is called Sheriff.

28. Sheriff—Latin term for 'shrub,' we called—broom, worn by the first earl of Enjue, as an emblem of humility, when they went to the pilgrimage, and from this their hairs took their crest and sur name.

29. Sheriff is a kind of titlous sect of people, as—Barons, Nobles, etc.

30. *Sheriff* a tittle given on those person who were respectve and pious in England.

The students were examined in the following bulky matters; Geometry; the Solar Spectrum; the Habeas Corpus Act; the British Parliament; and in Metaphysics they were asked to trace the progress of scepticism from Descartes to Hume. It is within bounds to say that some of the results were astonishing. Without doubt there were students present who justified their teachers' wisdom in introducing them to these studies; but the fact also is evident that others had been pushed into these studies to waste their time over them when they could have been profitably employed in hunting smaller game. Under the head of Geometry, one of the answers is this:

'49. The whole BD=the whole CA and so-so-so-so-so—so.

To me this is cloudy; but I was never well up in geometry. That was the only effort made among the five students who appeared for examination in geometry; the other four wailed; and surrendered without a fight. They are piteous wails, too--wails of despair; and one of them is an eloquent reproach; it comes from a poor fellow who has been laden beyond his strength and is eloquent in spite of the poverty of its English. The poor chap finds himself required to explain riddles which even Sir Isaac Newton was not able to understand:

50. 'Oh my dear father examiner you my father and you kindly give a number of pass you my great father,

51. 'I am a poor boy and have no means to support my mother and two brothers who are suffering much for want of food. I get four rupees monthly from charity fund of this place from which I send two rupees for their support and keep two for my own support. Father ! If I relate the unlucky circumstance under which we are placed then I think you will not be able to suppress the tender tear.

52. 'Sir which Sir Isaac Newton and other experienced mathematicians can not understand I being third of Entrance Class can understand these which is too impossible to imagine ? And my examiner also has put very tiresome and very heavy propositions to prove.'

We must remember that these pupils had to do their thinking in one language and express themselves

in another and alien one. It was a heavy handicap. I have by me 'English as She is Taught'—a collection of American examinations made in the public schools of Brooklyn by one of the teachers, Miss Caroline B. Le Row. An extract or two from its pages will show that when the American pupil is using but one language, and that one his own, his performance is no whit better than his Indian brother's.

### *On History.*

Christopher Columbus was called the father of his Country.

Queen Isabella of Spain sold her watch and chain and other millinery so that Columbus could discover America.

The Indian wars were very desecrating to the country.

The Indians pursued their warfare by hiding in the bushes and then scalping them.

Captain John Smith has been styled the father of his country. His life was saved by his daughter Pocahontas.

The Puritans found an insane asylum in the wilds of America.

The Stamp Act was to make everybody stamp all materials so they should be null and void.

Washington died in Spain almost broken-hearted. His remains were taken to the cathedral in Havana.

Gorilla warfare was where men rode on gorillas.

In Brooklyn as in India, they examine a pupil, and when they find out he doesn't know anything and can't learn anything, they put him into literature,

or geometry or astronomy, or government, or something like that, so that he can properly display the assification of the whole system :

*On Literature*

Bracebridge Hall was written by Henry Irving.

Edgar A. Poe was a very curdling writer.

Beowulf wrote the Scriptures.

Ben Jonson survived Shakespeare in some respects.

In the Canterbury Tale it gives account of King Alfred on his way to the shrine of Thomas Bucket.

Chaucer was the father of English pottery.

Chaucer was succeeded by H. Wads. Longfellow.

We will finish with a couple of samples of 'literature'—one from America, the other from India. The first is a Brooklyn public school boy's attempt to turn a few verses of the 'Lady of the Lake' into prose. You will have to concede that he did it :

'The man who rode on the horse performed the whip and an instrument made of steel alone with strong ardour not diminishing, for, being tried from the time passed with hard labour overworked with anger and ignorant with weariness, while every breath for labour he drew with cries full of sorrow, the young deer made imperfect who worked hard filtered in sight.'

The following paragraph is from a little book which is famous in India—the biography of a distinguished Hindoo Judge, Onoocool Chunder Mookerjee ; it was written by his nephew, and is unintentionally



funny—in fact, exceedingly so. I offer here the closing scene.

‘And having said these words he hermetically sealed his lips not to open them again. All the well-known doctors of Calcutta that could be procured for a man of his position and wealth were brought,—Doctors Payne, Fayrer, and Nilmadhub Mookerjee and others : they did what they could do, with their puissance and knack of medical knowledge, but it proved after all as if to milk the ram ! His wife and children had not the mournful consolation to hear his last words, he remained *sotto voce* for a few hours and then was taken from us at 6.12 P.M. according to the caprice of God which passeth understanding.’

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